Chronicles

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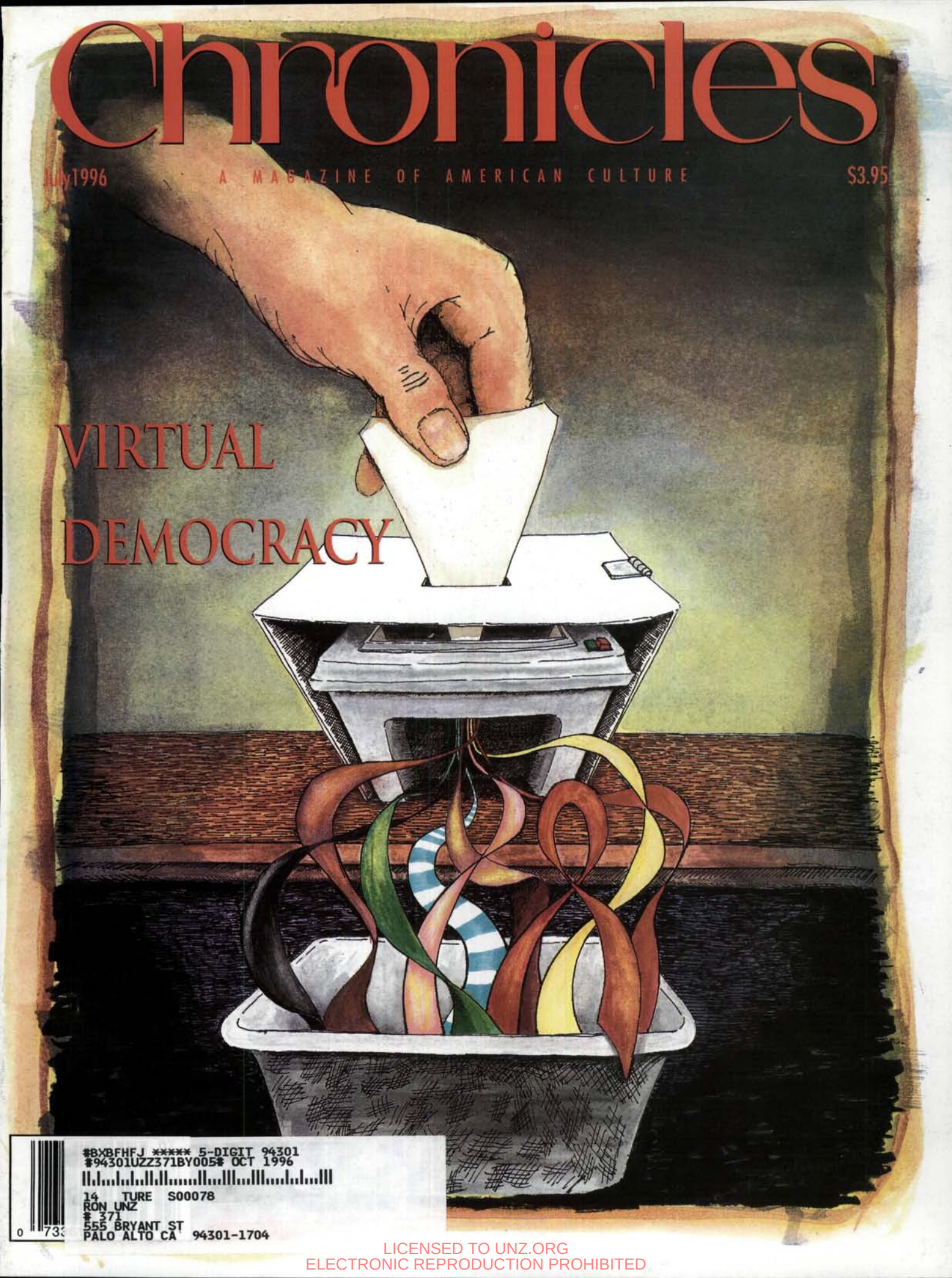

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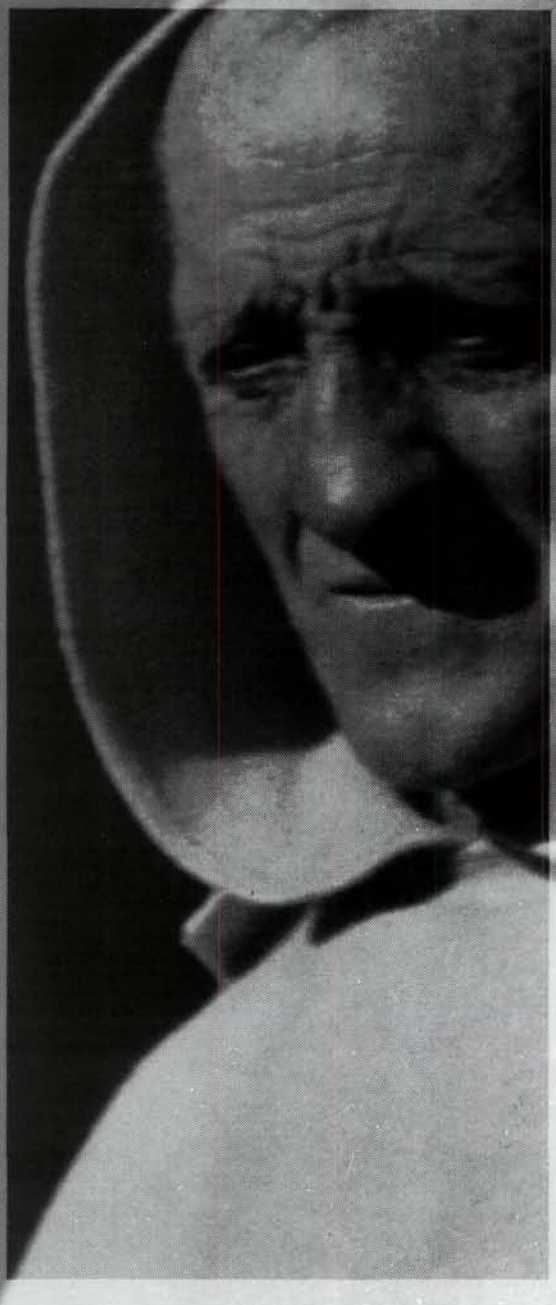

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Politics and Race

Now that Samuel Francis's two-part installment on his "Rise and Fall" appears complete (April and May 1996), it's time for the readers of *Chronicles* to hear the rest of the story. What he did not disclose was the nature of his blatantly white supremacist writings that appeared in a newsletter called *American Renaissance*.

In the March 1995 issue, Mr. Francis wrote that whites should begin a "reconquest of the United States," which "would mean the supremacy of whites in a cultural sense." Whites could solve the "racial problem" by, among other things, "imposing adequate fertility controls on nonwhites." Mr. Francis also says that "whites must correct their political and legal order to end the political power of nonwhite minorities and their white anti-white allies." He says he supports "equality of legal rights," meaning the rights of "personal security, personal liberty, and property," but that this "does not mean political equality, the right to vote, or the right to hold political office, let alone . . . the 'right' to attend the same schools, to serve on juries, to marry across racial lines," etc. Mr. Francis further notes that "the history of the white race is one of the conquest and domination of nonwhites. . . . The tragedy of this history of conquest is that there have almost never been enough whites to avoid being absorbed by the conquered peoples, either racially or culturally."

In the past, Mr. Francis has defended himself against criticism of these quotations by saying that they are taken out of context. But the entire article from which they are taken is just more of the same. I wonder what possible context could reveal the enlightened nature of a call for "adequate fertility controls on nonwhites" and an end to "the political power of nonwhite minorities and their white anti-white allies."

Mr. Francis is entitled to his opinions. But a major newspaper is entitled to maintain itself as a public forum and to keep its opinion page free of bigotry. I would hardly expect the *Washington Times* to run a syndicated column written by Louis Farrakhan, even if it did not convey the racist and anti-Semitic views of its author.

Mr. Francis complains about me and my "wrecking crew" at the Center for Equal Opportunity. But his is entirely a case of self-destruction. The filth he wrote in *American Renaissance* does not represent any respectable strain of conservatism, including paleoconservatism. He has, indeed, "gone too far."

By the way, Mr. Francis is telling "untruths" of his own when he says that "not once did a single one of [my critics] contact me or offer any public criticism of anything I had written." Greg Forster, a policy analyst at CEO, telephoned Mr. Francis not long after he was fired from the *Times*. Mr. Francis could be forgiven for having forgotten about the call, because it was very brief—Mr. Francis would not answer any questions. But what excuse does he have for forgetting about the public criticism of his writings contained in Mr. Forster's letter to the *Wall Street Journal*, which was published on December 1, 1995?

—Linda Chavez, President
Center for Equal Opportunity
Washington, D.C.

Dr. Francis Replies:

Actually, I expect that most of the readers of *Chronicles* are way ahead of Miss Chavez in knowing the "rest of the story." They have been reading my views—on race and many other subjects—in these pages for years, and at least a few of them have also read *American Renaissance*, a newsletter that so far from publishing "filth" has in fact published writings by and interviews with some very prominent scientists and academics and is always a reliable and sane account of racial realities and relations.

It is difficult to restore passages to their context after careless or dishonest minds have distorted them. Nevertheless, I have already tried to repair the damage in my response to Gregory Forster's December 1, 1995, letter to the editor in the *Wall Street Journal* in a letter of my own (December 20, 1995) and in a subsequent letter (March 21, 1996) responding to inaccuracies in a *Journal* news story. Of course, in her zeal to impart to the readers "the rest of the story," Chavez makes no reference to either of these, though she faults me for not discussing Forster's letter.

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And of course, in their determination to prove me a "white supremacist," both Chavez and Forster neglect to cite my explicit disavowal of white supremacy in the *American Renaissance* article, a disavowal that I quoted in my letter to the *Journal* of December 20. That too is a part of the "rest of the story" Chavez would prefer the reader not hear. The "reconquest" of the United States, I wrote, "does not involve any restoration of white supremacy in the political and legal sense that obtained under slavery or segregation, and there is no reason why nonwhites who reside in the United States could not enjoy equality of legal rights." While Chavez is eager to instruct us in what "respectable conservatism" is, she seems to find it inconceivable that neither I nor other paleoconservatives endorse Warren Court-era notions of political equality, voting rights, school integration, etc., and she fails to show the least grasp that equality before the law is the only equality the Constitution can be said to recognize.

I do not intend to correct yet again all the distortions of my views that Mr. Forster has slapped together for her, but this is the full sentence I wrote in *American Renaissance* having to do with "imposing adequate fertility controls on non-whites":

> *If whites wanted to do so* [italics in original], they could dictate a solution to the racial problem tomorrow—by curtailing immigration and sealing the border, by imposing adequate fertility controls on nonwhites and encouraging a higher white birth rate, by refusing to be bullied into enduring 'multiculturalism,' affirmative action, civil rights laws and policies; and by refusing to submit to cultural dissolution, inter-racial violence and insults, and the guilt that multiracialists inculcate.

My point in this passage was not so much to advocate these specific policies as to emphasize that at the present time there is not sufficient white will to support these or any other policies that will effectively protect white Americans from the eventual extinction they face due to the combination of long-term falling white birthrates with the unrestricted nonwhite immigration that Chavez so enthusiastically supports.

As for the passage about ending "the political power of nonwhite minorities and their white anti-white allies," here is the full sentence, followed by the immediate context:

> Whites must correct the political and legal order to end the political power for nonwhite minorities and their white anti-white allies. This political effort would involve a radical dismantling of all affirmative action and civil rights legislation as well as a good part of the federal superstructure that entrenches minority power. It also would require recovering an understanding of constitutional law that permits local and state governments to govern, and private institutions to function independently of government.

As a foe of affirmative action herself, Chavez surely cannot find the meaning of this context very mysterious or sinister. Indeed, I and many other paleoconservatives have repeatedly argued for this and similar positions in *Chronicles*, the *Washington Times*, and other places. It simply means the abolition of the civil rights and affirmative action machinery of the federal government. It is perfectly obvious that it is through that machinery that nonwhites and antiwhite whites have grabbed political power to advance antiwhite agendas and interests.

While some of the proposals I put forward in the *American Renaissance* piece remain problematical to my mind—e.g., despite my proposal for a strict federalist solution to racial conflicts, I am not totally convinced such a solution would work today—I stand by all of them and the piece as a whole as serious efforts to deal with race and racial conflict. I tried to address these issues without the cant of egalitarianism, guilt, and groveling that usually frames both liberal and conservative discussions of race, and it is precisely because the article was free of such cant that Chavez thinks it is "filth." It tells us a great deal about her mind that she cannot distinguish. "Filth" for neoconservatives is what fails to regurgitate liberal premises. (For *Chronicles* readers who wish to read the article for themselves, please write me for a copy at P.O. Box 19627, Alexandria, VA 22320-0627).

Most of the rest of Chavez's comments strike me as simply stupid. Both I and Louis Farrakhan are concerned with race, so in Chavez's cant-riddled mind that means I am just as much a bigot as he. But I have never used the kind of racial insults, stereotypes, and slurs that Farrakhan and Wes Pruden use, nor do I subscribe to the kind of paranoid, pseudoscientific, and irrationalist cosmology that Farrakhan endorses. As a matter of fact, when Farrakhan visits the offices of the major Washington papers, he is received far more politely than whites who speak far less provocatively in support of their own race and people.

When I said that not once did any of my enemies (not, as she says, "critics"—critics often contacted me) call me or offer any public criticism of what I had written, I was thinking of the time prior to my being fired. I do in fact recall Forster calling me after a *Washington Post* news story reported that I had been fired. I returned Forster's call and, when he told me he had been planning an article about me, wished him good day. I had known since the summer that he was snooping around, but I had not known until then what exactly he was up to. It does not seem to have occurred to him or the rest of them to call me up, ask to interview me on the record about what I had written, or just discuss it in an open and aboveboard manner.

In general, the Chavez letter confirms the account of the neoconservative mentality I gave in my article. That mentality is so narrowly constricted to its own assumptions, values, and beliefs that it finds it impossible to give any benefit of the doubt to those who dissent from it. It is a mind incapable of tolerating or respecting any disagreement even as it chuckles over how tolerant it is. It is a mind so enveloped in certainty of its own virtue that it cannot distinguish between radically different kinds of deviation, and it does not hesitate to mount crusades to smash all deviations from itself. Most conservatives are familiar with this mentality, if not from firsthand observation, then at least from the results of its blustering course through history in such windbags as Cromwell, Robespierre, John Brown, and the Abolitionists. Chavez and her brood are well met in their company.

Samuel Francis's
Principalities & Powers column
will resume next month.

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HOLLAND has a dirty little secret. In the North Sea resort of Scheveningen, there is a prison where you can be indefinitely incarcerated without trial, or where you can be delivered on the orders of an ad hoc "court" that sometimes issues warrants only *after* politically motivated arrests have been made. The court is ten miles away, in The Hague, and it goes by the name of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia Since 1 January 1991.

The creation of the Tribunal, three years ago, was sought by the Clinton administration and its allies in the Islamic world for purely political reasons, as yet another tool of pressuring and punishing the Serbs. According to Susan Woodward of the Brookings Institution, "the accusations became a servant of American policy toward the conflict itself, which required a conspiracy of silence about parties which were not considered aggressors."

The disapproved-of party in the Yugoslav war was to be pilloried, and The Hague was needed to give legitimacy and "legality" to that decision. Accordingly, of the 57 suspects who have been indicted by the end of April, 46 were Serbs. At the same time, the prosecution seems unconcerned by the most severe crimes committed against the Serbs, such as the largest ethnic cleansing of the entire Yugoslav conflict and killings of civilians committed by Croats in August 1995 in the Krajina.

The goings on at The Hague could have escaped wider scrutiny but for the recent case of a Bosnian-Serb general, 61-year-old Djordje Djukic, which has dealt a major blow to the credibility of the tribunal. Mistakenly trusting American assurances of unhindered passage on open roads in demilitarized areas, General Djukic, his assistant Colonel Krsmanovic, and their driver were ambushed on January 30 by Muslim government forces near Sarajevo and taken prisoner. The Muslims duly announced that they were holding the two officers on suspicion of war crimes, although neither the Tribunal nor the Muslim government itself had previously listed Djukic or Krsmanovic—logistics officers who had never commanded front-line troops—as suspected war criminals.

NATO commanders on the ground were furious at what they regarded as a blatant Muslim provocation. Brigadier Andrew Cumming, the British officer who directs the NATO force's Joint Operations Center in Bosnia, immediately described their seizure by the Muslims as "provocative and inflammatory." He stressed that, under the Dayton Accord, all military activities within the no man's land separating the government-held territories from those of the Bosnian Serbs were prohibited.

Djukic's arrest caused a rare expression of displeasure with Izetbegovic in some Western political quarters. The *Washington Post* reported that "Western officials have privately voiced opposition to the arrests, saying . . . they came at an inopportune time in the implementation of the accord and uprooted the first sprouts of hope for improved ties between Bosnia's Muslims and Serbs." Echoing the mood in London, the *Economist* opined that "the arrests seem to menace one of the peace plan's fundamental principles, freedom of movement across the whole of Bosnia."

At this point The Hague Tribunal obligingly came to Izetbegovic's rescue: on February 6, its chief prosecutor Richard Goldstone "asked" the Bosnian Muslim government to "provisionally arrest" the two officers, saying it "might" indict them for war crimes. By the time Goldstone came on board, Djukic and Krsmanovic had spent *eight days* in a Muslim jail; but from that point on, Izetbegovic could claim that their further detention was "legal." To the delight of mission creep enthusiasts, on February 12, NATO was also included in the affair, by having to provide a C-130 to take the two from Sarajevo to The Hague.

According to Goldstone, they were brought to Scheveningen to be investigated for their role in the shelling of Sarajevo; but significantly, as the *New York Times* reported a day after their transfer to Holland, "officials close to The Hague said the men may be held as witnesses in other cases."

The possibility of plea bargains was broadly hinted at by Goldstone himself. He noted that while the two Serbs "are themselves under suspicion, because of their positions as senior military officers they may be able, as witnesses, to provide investigators with important information relevant to other enquiries being conducted by the prosecutor's office."

Goldstone's hopes of using the Serb general as a star witness against Karadzic and Mladic were soon dashed. After two weeks of being subjected to threats and promises, Djukic was punished for his refusal to provide desirable testimony by being formally indicted on February 29. He was charged with being "part of an operation" designed "to kill, injure, terrorize and demoralize the civilian population."

It was soon apparent that Goldstone's vindictiveness was shortsighted. Even those commentators who could never be accused of pro-Serb sympathies found the whole episode rather sordid. Edward Cody, writing in the *Washington Post* on April 7, noted the "terrible banality" of the indictment, and warned that on this form hardly any 20th-century leader could avoid the same charge:

> Did Harry Truman order the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki "in order to kill, injure, terrorize and demoralize the civilian population" of Japan? Of course he did, and for the most part, history has treated him kindly for it. Winston Churchill ordered the firebombing of Dresden for the same awful reason.

Cody correctly noted that as a consequence, the Tribunal has made itself "vulnerable to already heated contentions among many Serbs that it is an instrument of revenge and political expediency rather than justice."

By the middle of April, Colonel Krsmanovic was released, and it had become obvious that any public trial of Djukic would collapse in ignominy even under the Tribunal's own rules. At the same time, Goldstone was not prepared to eat the humble pie of relenting on his indictment. He decided that the easiest way out was to release the ailing Serb general "on humanitarian grounds." Of course, this was in itself an admission of the frivolity of the charges: no "humanitarian" considerations could possibly

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justify the release of a real, full-blooded war criminal.

L'affaire Djukic is more than just a reminder of the travesty of justice going on in The Hague. A dangerous precedent in positive international law has been created, too, and a thorough revision of the U.N. Charter has been effected. The Hague may yet prove to be a step toward the globalist dream of a permanent International Criminal Tribunal. The goal is not to delegitimize war crimes *per se*, but to enhance the power of New World Order enthusiasts to decide *what is* a war crime on the basis of current political calculations. To the Albrightesque mind there is no danger of the United States having to accept the jurisdiction of an International Criminal Tribunal created by the resolution of the U.N. Security Council, without congressional consent, without presidential signature, with primacy over the Constitution and over American courts. Such indignities are reserved for a Serbia, or a Rwanda. The true goal is not to give up control, but to exercise it. The objective is not to build a new global superstate, but to develop more effective tools to keep existing states in submission.

Chief prosecutor Goldstone is leaving The Hague to take an attractive new post in his native South Africa. It is doubtful whether his hand-picked successor, Madam Justice Arbour from Ontario, will be able to restore some credibility to the prosecutor's office. The task may prove beyond the powers of even the fairest-minded of jurists: the system of justice created in The Hague is inherently unfair.

For many it is also lucrative. Like any other ideologically inspired and publicly funded project in social engineering, the Tribunal has become an important provider of sinecure to a legion of lawyers, paper-pushers, and "experts." It has gobbled up over 40 million dollars so far, and this year's budget alone amounts to another 40 million. This is enough to guarantee its transmutation into a self-perpetuating bureaucratic Leviathan which will never willingly leave the scene.

And who pays for all this? Increasingly, the American taxpayer. While some early bankrolling of the Tribunal came from the Islamic world, a lot of its current budget comes from the U.S. Treasury—including 2.3 million dollars' worth of computer equipment donated to the prosecutor's office. The majority of Americans whose innate sense of fairness has not been corrupted by inside-the-Beltway considerations might have good reason to feel that their tax dollars are being misused. Most of them do not know the truth about The Hague Tribunal. If they did, they just might care.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS and *Vanity Fair* get the Connie Chung Award for May. "Thanks for your help," read the letter inserted in my complimentary copy of the May issue of *Vanity Fair*. It seemed like a polite gesture, a pat on the head for sharing my research (published and unpublished) on plagiarism. The irony—if you can call it that—is that nowhere in Christopher Hitchens' May column on plagiarism does he acknowledge my work.

About a month before the May issue appeared, I received a call from *Vanity Fair*'s fact-checker, Walter Owen. He said Christopher Hitchens would be quoting from my 1994 book, *The Martin Luther King, Jr., Plagiarism Story*, for his May column, and he wondered whether I would, one, confirm certain parallel passages that I had culled from King's papers and which Mr. Hitchens planned to quote in his column; two, confirm the title of King's paper analyzed on page 91 of my book, which Mr. Hitchens wanted to cite; and three, provide the full name of the source that King had plagiarized in this essay.

I remember the call well, for it was nearly five o'clock in the afternoon and I was running late for an engagement. But I canceled my dinner plans, took Mr. Owen's number, dug out my files and a copy of my book, and called him back with the information as requested. When I received my comp for "services rendered," I phoned Mr. Owen to find out what had happened to Mr. Hitchens' reference to me and my research. He said he didn't know but that he would find out.

Now, there are a variety of creative ways in which *Vanity Fair* could have handled this situation. It could have reveled in the irony of one of its columnists stealing material for an article about theft. It could have apologized forthwith, explaining that a mad Turk in the office had gone on a rampage, excising at random Greek names from the May copy. Or it could have promised to correct the omission in the next issue. In other words, *Vanity Fair* had ample time and opportunity to "explain" the "oversight," but instead it chose to lie about the matter.

According to Walter Owen, *Vanity Fair*'s executive editor Elise O'Shaughnessy stated that Mr. Hitchens had no obligation to cite me and my research, for my information was "general knowledge," and, after all, "Mr. Hitchens' column is not an academic work with footnotes." "General knowledge" is the stuff of encyclopedias and almanacs, not of published research in monographs. If the evidence for King's plagiarisms were general knowledge, Mr. Hitchens would not have consulted my book in the first place. Mr. Hitchens says that Arianna Huffington did not acquire by transcendental means the information she stole for her biography of Picasso, and the same holds true for the examples of King's plagiarisms that Mr. Hitchens cites in his column.

Moreover, if Ms. O'Shaughnessy had actually read Mr. Hitchens' column, she would have known that literary theft most often occurs in expositions *without* footnotes, as in speeches, novels, newspapers, and magazines. Joe Biden, Alex Haley, Molly Ivins, and David Leavitt all plagiarized in the context of nonacademic work.

By refusing to cite his sources, Mr. Hitchens gave his readers the impression that not only did he have King's student papers at his elbow, as well as copies of the works which served as King's sources, but that he had also done what I had to do throughout my four years of writing on the King plagiarism story: spend hours poring over original documents.

Mr. Hitchens ends his column with a challenge to his readers: to find any pilfered passages in his article on pilfering. Well, as Mr. Hitchens reportedly said when he caught Taki lifting a phrase from an article by Norman Podhoretz, "Gotcha!"

—*Theodore Pappas*

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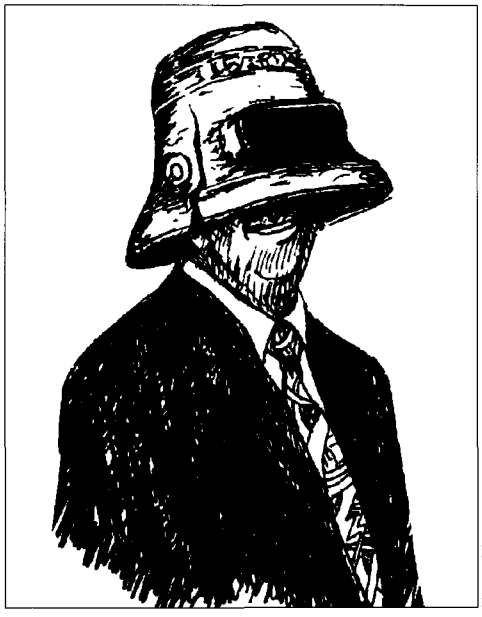

H. Ward Sterett

Virtual Democracy

by Thomas Fleming

Dittoheads were depressed at the end of April, when Rush Limbaugh announced his "trial separation from the Republican Party." As in so many divorce cases, the charge was infidelity: the GOP had caved in on the minimum wage. Even though a good moral case might be made for the concept of a living wage, there is a great gap between a moral principle (such as "love thy neighbor as thyself") and the decision to employ the instruments of state coercion euphemistically styled "policies," "programs," or "congressional legislation." Rush was perfectly justified in his disgust, but what he and other Republicans must begin to realize is that the principles of economic conservatism are only secondary goals, which cannot be pursued as ultimate or absolute ends. If the minimum wage is merely inefficient or unfair in distorting the free relations of the marketplace, a sensible Republican politician will often (probably always) find it in his interest to vote for a little inefficiency in the short run. Politics, he will say, is the art of the compromise which aims at the possible, and if the ultimate goal is the most efficient and productive economy that is possible, then there can be nothing wrong with taking a zigzag course so long as every conservative zig goes a little farther than the liberal zag. That it only occasionally works like this, that conservative statesmanship is more often two steps back for every one step forward, is not a subject for polite discussion at Republican think tanks.

To oppose the minimum wage or price controls or AFDC payments requires an essentially moral understanding of the proper function of government. If the national state bears some responsibility for the personal welfare or economic condition of individual citizens, then liberals and conservatives can debate until the end of time just exactly how much money, how much control, how much interference is justifiable in the name of some greater good. If, on the other hand, there are some areas of life into which the state may never legitimately intrude—marriage, birth, childrearing, private associations and agreements—then a "conservative" politician can no more agree to a national law on spanking or a minimum wage than he can countenance mandatory sterilization of "the unfit" or the slaughter of the innocent.

In their defense, some Republicans are pointing to opinion polls which seem to indicate that a majority of Americans favor an increase in the minimum wage. We live in a democracy, after all, and—in Mencken's famous gibe—"Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard." Democracy, on this widely held understanding, is conceived of in positive terms, as the people's right to do this or that. If Lincoln's "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" means anything, it implies that political power in a democracy is exercised by the people (obviously through their representatives) in pursuit of their desires and self-interest.

This "positive" conception of democracy corresponds to the positive rights invented by 19th-century liberals on their pilgrimage to socialism. The doctrine of natural rights, vacuous as it is, remained relatively harmless so long as classical liberals had control of the definition. For Locke and his descendants, political rights were immunities against a sovereign who wished to deprive his subjects, without due cause, of their life, liberty, or other property. Like the threshold of a freeman's house, negative rights marked the boundaries of private life into which government was not supposed to intrude. With the invention of positive rights, individuals were now possessed of positive

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claims against the purse of their fellow subjects. Since a full life includes the possibility of achieving one's ambitions without the hindrances that are presented by entrenched social classes, then the right to lead a full life cannot be exercised without a minimum level of subsistence, medical attention, and education. Real liberty, in other words, requires socialism.

If negative liberties, like the Ten Commandments, are a series of "thou shalt nots" reflecting the highest political morality of the nation, positive liberties speak the language of empowerment. Whenever President Clinton or Senator Dole speak of "justice" or "social security" or what is "fair" to the American people, the simple translation is that they, the rich and powerful careerists who own the army and the police, are sticking a bayonet up your nose and robbing your children of their inheritance. That some small part of the money may be spent on something useful is irrelevant, if only because most tax dollars end up in the pockets of politicians, their employees, and their dependents. But even if politicians and bureaucrats were all altruists, most of what government does today would still represent an abuse of power.

The legitimate functions of all government are few and limited: protection from invasion, the maintenance of sound money, the enforcement of laws protecting persons and property. Despite the unchecked growth of governmental powers, our own national government refuses to defend our Southern border against an invasion of illegal immigrants. As for sound money, the federal government is the greatest counterfeiter on the planet, passing off its debt-scrip as legal tender, each dollar bill representing a notice of payment due that is awaiting our unborn grandchildren. The federal role in law enforcement consists, for the most part, of federal court decisions that enfranchise the criminal classes and shield them from the justice—and vengeance—they deserve.

Whenever these familiar arguments are made, the answer is sure to go something like this: But, my dear reactionary, this is a democracy, where the people rule. If you don't like this "government by the people," then you are free to emigrate. In other words, a temporary majority of voters has the right to do anything it likes. In Italy, a slim majority voting in an overheated plebiscite toppled the monarchy. Here in America, the demagogue Ross Perot has threatened that if elected, he would subject our most fundamental constitutional liberties to the whim of an electronic plebiscite—a virtual reality town meeting.

Considered in the abstract, positive democracy means the power of a majority to do as it likes, and since the majority is always less rich, less intelligent, less educated, and less beautiful than the minorities, it would also mean the dictatorship of the poor, the stupid, the ignorant, and the ugly who, in the name of equality, would persecute their superiors. It is the world of "Harrison Bergeron" and the Equal Opportunity cops in Washington. On the surface, the state of our current regime fulfills Thomas Aquinas's definition of democracy: "If a bad government is carried on by the multitude, it is called a democracy, i.e., control by the populace, which comes about when the plebeian people by force of numbers oppress the rich. In this way the whole people will be as one tyrant." The reality is that the people have a short attention span, and what looks like mob rule almost always turns out to be a stage-show manipulated by a ruling elite.

Thomas's definition echoes Aristotle. A legitimate government of the people, according to Aristotle, is a *politeia*—a name common to all governments— and as examples both he and Thomas cite a group of warriors holding dominion over a city. A democratic commonwealth, then, is in the hands of the citizen soldiers of a Greek commonwealth like Sparta or Athens, the Roman Republic in its best days, or the Italian cities and towns of Thomas's own time. In none of them was power shared with women, children, foreigners, aliens, the propertyless. Unlike the Soviet Union of a few years ago or the United States today, none of these commonwealths aimed at the dictatorship of the proletariat.

What Thomas knew best, of course, was the medieval *civitas*, a chartered city run by a representative oligarchy. In a passage of the *De Monarchia*, Thomas argues (again following the Philosopher) that man is by his nature gregarious, if only because as an individual he is not complete. There is some self-sufficiency within a familial household which provides for its own nourishment and rears children; and even more within a neighborhood settled by members of one craft guild. However, a city, which is community brought to completion, is self-sufficient in all necessities of life.

We do not have to imagine what sort of political arrangements St. Thomas had in mind, because we know a fair amount about the organization of medieval cities and towns in medieval Italy, where the political structure was as decentralized as anything Jefferson might have wished. Each city was divided into well-defined neighborhoods based either on the parish or on the dominant craft guild. Kinfolks tended to locate in the same neighborhoods, and noble clans built their houses close together, connected with various passageways, and defended by strongly built towers that you can still see today in San Gimignano, Pisa, and elsewhere.

Any talk of "the state" or even of government would be very misleading. Thomas's *civitas* is a highly decentralized political community, and the government more like a corporation than a bureaucracy. His vision of a commonwealth, restricted by law and custom, not only finds fulfillment in the early American republic, but it also runs parallel, point for point, to Aristotle's discussion in both *Ethics* and *Politics*. The Greeks are often said to have "invented" democracy (for social scientists, coining a term is the same thing as discovering something), and there are still political intellectuals who say that ancient Athens—for all its limitations—came closest, of any commonwealth, to achieving democracy: the direct rule of the people.

The imperfections of Athenian democracy were well known to the men who drafted and ratified the American constitutions, and in the 20th century there is a widespread misconception that the Greek polis—whether Athens or Sparta—was a prototype for the total state, in which the state is all, the citizen nothing.

It is all too easy to recount the horrors and atrocities committed by the Athenians in the name of democracy: the condemnation of the victorious generals at Arginusae, the reckless attack on Syracuse, the brutal conquest—actually a genocide—of Melos, the execution of Socrates. Nearly all of these memorable outrages, however, including the trial and execution of Socrates, were immoral exercises of legitimate government functions in a period that witnessed a brutal war, a tyrannical oligarchy, and a civil war. Two of the worst oligarchs were friends of Socrates (and uncles of his chief disciple, Plato). The philosopher was condemned for playing Marcuse to a set of spoiled rich kids who ruined their country.

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Nonetheless, what is most striking about Athens is not what the commonwealth could do (or even how it did it), but what it could not do, especially if she is compared with democratic regimes since the French Revolution—governments that redistributed wealth, subverted religion, and interfered in private and domestic life.

This generalization requires some justification. According to Thucydides' Pericles, it was an Athenian peculiarity to consider the man who took no part in public affairs not as a non-busybody (*apragmon*) but as a good-for-nothing, and this theme of public duty becomes a commonplace of Athenian politics. Nonetheless, one has to distinguish between a man's need to win honor in the public activities of war and politics from the private citizen's (or, for that matter, public official's) reluctance to meddle in the private affairs of another citizen and his household.

In the early fourth century, an Athenian citizen named Euphiletus was tried for murder, after he killed his wife's lover in her bedroom. The woman who informed on the couple prefaced her revelation with a disclaimer: "Euphiletus, don't think I am accosting you because I am a busybody. In fact, the man who is wronging you and your wife happens to be my personal enemy." In other words, minding your own business is the positive virtue; interfering has to be justified.

Even if there were Athenians who wished to use the powers of government as a wedge and crowbar to break down their neighbors' doors, Athens had no resources for coercion: there was no Athenian BATF to confiscate weapons of household defense, no schools to indoctrinate the children in filial disobedience, no police, even, to arrest a suspected burglar or break up a brawl. Virginia Hunter's recent book *Policing Athens* makes this point emphatically: "Private initiative and self-help were fundamental to policing Athens. . . . Athenians were bound to one another by ties of reciprocal dependency. In order to carry out the tasks of policing and law enforcement, they required a dependable network of kin and friends."

So far from being state-centered, Athens was a home-centered society, in which families and kin-groups were expected to discipline offenses within the group, rear their children, and provide for their own security. The Athenian house and property were more inviolable than an Englishman's castle, and marriage was an agreement between individuals and their families. The marriages were registered not with the city but with the formal kin-group, the phratry (ordinarily the husband's). Similarly, children were presented to the husband's *phrateres*, who might later be called upon as witnesses to the child's legitimacy (and therefore citizenship).

For the proof of citizenship, the Attic deme, which certified boys when they reached 18, was far more significant than the phratry. These 139 demes were subdivisions of the 1,000 square miles of territory within the boundaries of Attica. In the countryside, at least, these demes had traditionally been local centers; some of them, in fact, had been independent villages before all Attica was merged into Athens. Later, they functioned as the formal political units, something like a ward or district, of the Athenian polis.

Apart from registering and certifying citizens, the governments of the demes supervised local religious cults, levied taxes for local purposes, and in some cases arbitrated disputes. Demesmen fought together in the Athenian infantry and supported each other in a variety of ways. Thucydides and Aristophanes both testify to the unhappiness of rural demesmen, forced to live in the city during the Peloponnesian War, and even when numbers of them did gravitate to Athens for business purposes, they seem to have stuck together. Socrates, on trial for his life, noted the presence of his fellow demesmen in the courtroom, and this regional sentiment in Attica lasted, as Raphael Sealey points out, down to the first century.

Athenian citizenship was rooted in the demes, much as Swiss citizenship is based on the commune and the canton. "An Athenian citizen was an Athenian citizen because, both logically and chronologically prior to that, he was a demesman." Such localism, says David Whitehead, the author of *The Demes of Attica*, stands in stark contrast with the United States, but this was not always the case. The states of the Union were, in the beginning, genuine states, and, as Tocqueville explained, those sovereign states themselves did little business: the life of 19th-century America was all in the towns and parishes that built schools and roads, raised posses and hanged horse thieves without bothering to ask permission from higher authorities.

Democracy in those days meant the very opposite of majority rule, that is, the tyranny of a fictitious majority constructed by the thieves and con artists who, because they will do no honest work, turn to politics. Democracy was the art of minding our own business, within our houses, our parishes, our towns, and our states. The government of Alabama had no more right to tell its citizens how to treat their children than the representatives of Massachusetts had to interfere in Alabama's internal affairs.

The federal structure of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights drew lines and imposed limits on the national government. Common law, common custom, and common sense dictated others. The ministers of George III had been tyrants, because they overstepped those limits; their soldiers had searched our shops and invaded our houses; their governors had infringed or suspended our charters. Never again, we said, and for nearly 100 years we made good on the promise.

Government kept within bounds by the force of law and custom: that is what is meant by a *politeia*. The polity's executive functions might be discharged by a representative council, a traditional aristocracy, or even a king, and the laws and customs might be good or bad, but the legitimacy of the polity arises not from the state's positive powers to make war or raise taxes but from the limitations imposed by custom and acquiesced in by the people. If the king wishes to impose newfangled burdens on the people, he is called a tyrant, and if a President decided that he had a mandate to impose socialized medicine, he too would be a tyrant, even if he were elected by 51 percent of the eligible voters instead of the mere 18 percent who supported Bill Clinton.

The legitimacy of a regime depends not upon what it does but on what it does not and cannot do. To the extent we still live under a government of laws and not of men, or rather, of precedent rather than of decrees, our national government is legitimate. What the ratio is, between tyranny and polity in the federal government, I do not know. But this much we all know, or ought to: until some party or movement begins using the solemn speech of justice and legitimacy, as opposed to the thieves' language of profits and efficiency, the ramparts against tyranny erected by our ancestors will continue, one by one, to fall to the invading army of judges, administrators, and democratically elected representatives.

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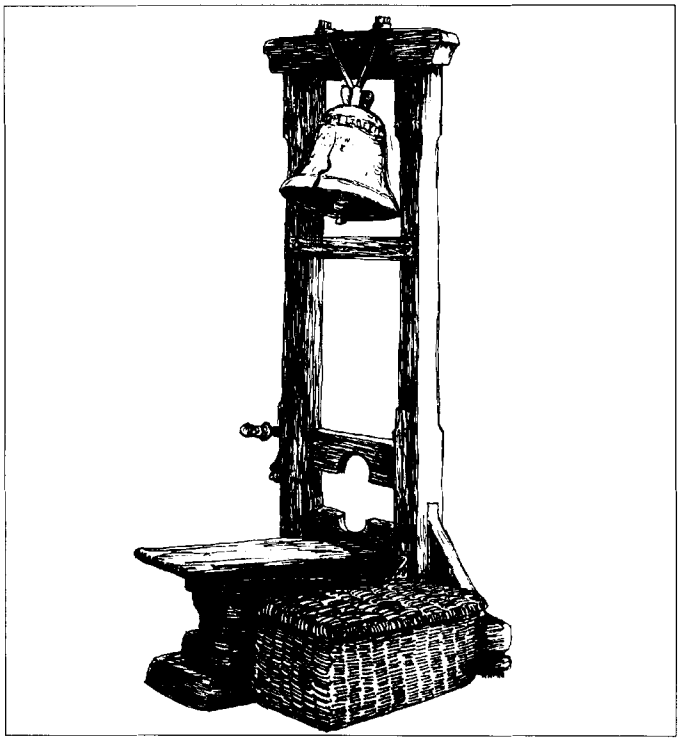
The Long Apprenticeship

American Democracy and the Future of Europe

by François Furet



H. Ward Sterett

Prizes are a particular pleasure for people who engage in the peculiar *métier* of writing books, because they are reassuring. Writing in fact involves a great deal of anxiety both before, during, and after; rewards allow one, at least for a time, to put those anxieties to rest. But my gratitude for *your* prize has more to it than that, for you are awarding it to someone who has spent his whole life working on the French Revolution, which is, after all, a historical subject far from your shores. By demonstrating the international character of knowledge and the intellectual community, you are also bringing me the special satisfaction of being honored by a country other than my own, and in a city where I have been teaching for 15 years.

America is my home away from home, and I am connected to the extraordinary city of Chicago by a sort of local patriotism. That attachment is more than academic, since it was in Hyde Park that I met my wife. But it is also founded upon the admiration that I have for the quality of the University of Chicago and the many things I share with the little intellectual community that is the Committee on Social Thought. Chicago has thus given me both an intellectual family and a family pure and simple. And now, you are crowning this happy story with your gracious recognition for which I am most grateful.

I have spent the majority of my life as a historian working on the period of the past during which France and America traversed the same fundamental experience. They were the first nations in the world to participate in the birth, or rather, the invention of modern democracy. That experience has joined our two nations around a common moral and intellectual heritage. The extraordinarily varied and even contradictory political practices that have grown out of that heritage, however, have also separated us. Think of the very opposite roles played in each of our traditions by such essential concepts as the state, administrative centralization, the relationship between the Constitution and the law, political parties, state regulation of markets, and so forth. For the historian, it is fascinating to see how the principles common to our two countries have managed to give rise to such diverse political civilizations. One result of that diversity has of course been that American politics are as mysterious to a Frenchman as French politics are to an American.

I cannot swear that we are completely on the other side of the age of reciprocal misunderstandings and ignorance, but I would venture that at this moment, in the late 20th century, our democracies are closer and more similar than ever before.

François Furet is a member of the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago, the author, most recently, of Revolutionary France 1770-1880, *and the recipient of the 1995 Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters, for which this was his acceptance speech.*

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On both sides of the Atlantic, we face the same big social questions, rendered more acute each day by the extension of the notion of "rights." The more wealth our societies produce, the more intense becomes the debate over how it should be distributed. In this realm, America has the same sort of problems as France and Western Europeans in general. The list runs from the urban crisis (which in Europe has taken the form of a suburban crisis) to the problem of how to pay for Social Security. Everywhere, political democracy has become social, and in this domain, America, in spite of its tradition of extreme individualism, has the same problems as the European welfare states.

On both sides of the Atlantic, we face the same big social questions, rendered more acute each day by the extension of the notion of 'rights.'

Today, however, as a way of expressing my gratitude, I would like to make a few remarks about how democratic constitutions of Europe have become closer to the American precedent, as if there has been, in many countries of Europe and Eastern Europe, a critical filtering of the heritage of 1789.

This evolution originated in the defeat of fascism, which was accompanied by progress in the spirit of moderation and prudence. The most spectacular illustration of this new way of thinking was the development of a true democracy in West Germany. Another example would be the intelligent and peaceful way that Franco's Spain became democratic in the mid-1970's. But before returning to the European scene, let us consider the recent history of my own country, France.

Heaven knows that France had a great deal of difficulty and took a long time to dominate that heritage and to anchor it in institutions both stable and free. A first "end" to the Revolution may be ascribed to the moment when Napoleon established his dictatorship and founded the modern centralized state with which we still live today. But if that "end" to the Revolution did indeed bequeath a state to contemporary France, it also consecrated the divorce between democracy and political liberty as well as the unrealistic policy of French domination of Europe. The French Revolution resumed its course again in 1815, and 19th-century France had the strange character, perhaps unique in history, of being a people repeating for a second time the repertory of the late 18th century: the return of the legitimate monarchy—soon to be overthrown again, followed by a new 1789-like attempt to establish a constitutional monarchy; then in 1848 came a new revolutionary Republic and even a second Bonaparte when the first had seemed so exceptional both for his genius and for the circumstances that brought him to power. Finally a new neo-Jacobin revolution and a last attempt to restore the Bourbons preceded the formation of the Third Republic, the first durable synthesis of the revolutionary democratic tradition.

If we look at our late 20th-century French Republic, the Fifth Republic, we can see to what extent French democratic institutions—the most consensual we have ever had since 1789—have, on the contrary, integrated elements that come from outside of the revolutionary tradition. The France of today is no longer that Republic where the singular and indivisible sovereignty of the public was exclusively in the hands of a Parliament or even of a single Assembly. Now sovereignty is vested in an autonomous judicial power which issues indirectly from the people while being independent and sometimes even above them: the Conseil constitutionnel, which is responsible for overseeing and verifying the constitutionality of laws. Additionally, the sovereign people voted overwhelmingly in favor of an idea passionately rejected by the French revolutionaries: that of a head of state elected by universal suffrage, something the men of 1789 saw as an embodiment of the ghost of the monarchy. The men of 1989 no longer view this idea as incompatible with French republicanism, for this is their way of adapting something common to almost all modern democracies today, and it constitutes a rediscovery of a strong executive power.

A sweeping glance at today's democracies would probably lead us to conclude that the ways in which they have resolved the famous 18th-century problem of how to organize the sovereignty of men over themselves are more similar than ever. For example, democracy founded not only upon the sovereignty of the people but upon the division of power is not only a well-known formula for government—well known since the 18th century—but a feature of all states that adopted free institutions. And regardless whether they have parliamentary or presidential systems or, as in France, a combination of the two, almost all—with the exception of Italy—have a strong executive power even when that power is not the direct result of universal suffrage but designated by Parliament. In fact, in democracies of the parliamentary sort, the prime minister's authority comes from the voters who elect the representatives—those representatives having been chosen according to the chief executive they support. In France's mixed regime, that unique combination of presidential and parliamentary regimes, the supreme head of the executive—the president—is elected separately from the representatives. Because of this, as in the case in the United States—the classic model of a presidential democracy—the power of the president may be limited by the choice of representatives—as is indeed the dominant trend in the United States. Very recently, in France, between 1986 and 1988, the French executive power has split itself in two, with the president and the prime minister coming from different majorities, thus constituting a new separation of power that would have surprised Montesquieu. Nevertheless, in all these cases, new or old, it would seem that strong executive power directly issuing from popular suffrage has become the rule in modern democracies, distancing them from the model of 1789.

To the list of common or at least comparable elements of contemporary Western democracies, we must also add the increased role of the judiciary in determining the constitutionality of laws. After World War II, and as a reaction to totalitarianism, supervision of laws by the judicial courts was established in Western Germany, Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, and, in

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1958, France. Although this is an idea that can be found in Sieyès' writings at the beginning of the Thermidorian period, it is alien to the French revolutionary tradition, which is characterized by what is called "parliamentary absolutism." It has nonetheless become a common element of 20th-century constitutionalism on both sides of the Atlantic and finds an unprecedented theater in Europe in the newly established European Convention of the Rights of Man, formed by all the member nations of the European Community. Not only do all of its members have constitutional courts, but those courts are linked by a charter of the Rights of Man and by a European Court of those same rights that functions as a supranational court of appeals. The result is the first milestone of the outline of a European state.

And so, even while democracy has encountered great disasters in our century, we are currently witnessing the opening-up of superior horizons—proof that the ideas of the French Revolution have in the end escaped from the malediction that the course of that revolution seemed to foretell. The democratic revolutionary tradition has indeed fostered incredible catastrophes, such as murderous utopias and the cult of the nation-state, but on the ruins of those tragedies, at the basis of our Western European societies, survive more than ever the principles of 1789, mastered at last and embodied in free institutions, and thereby closer to the American tradition. The guardian angels of the Europe we are trying to construct are neither military glory, the grandeur of the state, nor the end of history; they are more modest and modern spirits: the liberty and well-being of individuals.

At least this Europe, born of the ruins of its history and reemerging in prosperity, conserves some of the more significant elements of its exceptional past: the experience of democracy, scientific and technical knowledge, prosperity and all the preconditions for power except for a common will. Once more, it is doing something unprecedented with that heritage. Having once invented the nation-state—that remarkable instrument of civilization which almost proved fatal—Europe is now facing the challenge of inventing a new form of community composed of a collection of peoples who have for so long been in conflict.

Thus, at this moment at the end of the century, I am inclined to believe that while the postcommunist world appears divided and full of present and potential conflicts, modern democracy—its constitutional formulae and the conditions necessary for its stability—is secure. This does not imply that we have entered a period of consensus, since democracy is, by nature, and today more than ever, founded upon conflict and the struggle for power. But now, we understand how to organize those conflicts and struggles, and we know the price of failure. All during this long apprenticeship, the American experience has played a decisive role.

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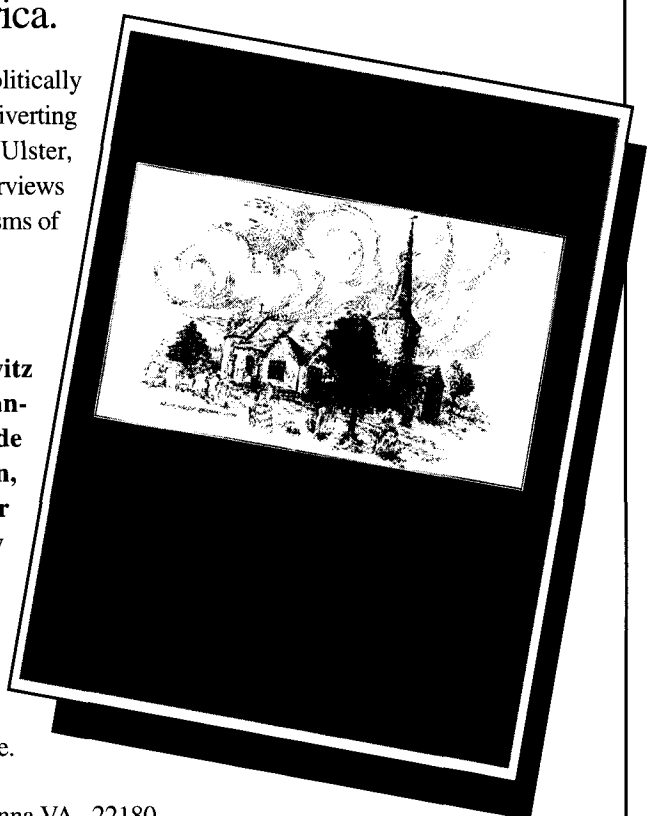

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A Mighty Long Fall

An Interview With Eugene McCarthy

by Bill Kauffman

H. Ward Sterett

Senator Eugene McCarthy is America's senior statesman without a party. An Irish-German Minnesota Catholic who left the seminary for academe, McCarthy was elected to the House of Representatives in 1948 and the Senate in 1958. He was the link between the Old Progressives of the Upper Midwest and the postwar liberals; as time goes by, his profile sharpens, and McCarthy seems much closer to Bob LaFollette than to Adlai Stevenson.

His challenge to President Johnson in 1968—an act of political suicide—gave voice to an incipient antiwar tendency in what had been an extremely hawkish Democratic Party. His strong showing in the New Hampshire primary drove LBJ back to his ranch, Bobby Kennedy into the race, and McCarthy into a kind of involuntary exile.

McCarthy ran for President as an independent in 1976 and was all but physically barred from competing in the 1992 Democratic primaries. His contention that we are becoming a country in which "everyone belongs to a corporation and everyone else belongs to the federal government" makes him unwelcome in a party that regards Bill Bradley as a cerebral maverick. Richard Rovere once wrote that McCarthy was too far left on foreign policy and too far right on domestic matters to win the Democratic nomination. Or was he just too far out? He pledged to serve only one term if elected and to fill the White House Rose Garden with "humble vegetables" because "you'd have a hard time announcing war in a cabbage patch." He published volumes of poetry and railed against the tyranny of the IRS. Of late, he has proposed to increase the number of congressional districts to 2,000 and revitalize the electoral college by turning it into a deliberative convention of 2,500 members elected in districts of 100,000 people.

Horse-race journalist Jules Witcover complained of McCarthy's "sometimes lackadaisical, sometimes mystical, nearly always aloof manner." McCarthy, who turned 80 in March, was hearty and genial when I interviewed him at the Algonquin Hotel in New York City.

Q: What happened to the good old Midwestern Progressive/Populist tradition? From Bob LaFollette to Richard Gephardt is a mighty long fall.

A: You see it in Minnesota, where some of the old Farmer-Laborites strongly opposed the fusion of the Democrats and Farmer-Laborites back in 1944. They said they would lose the spirit of Ignatius Donnelly and the old Progressives and the Non-Partisan League. I think the conservative force in Minnesota was actually the labor movement. They became pretty much Establishment; it came to a head in the 1968 campaign.

The party lost its bearing in '68 on the issue of the war in Vietnam. If Humphrey hadn't been the candidate, the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party would've been the most antiwar party of any state in the union because they had the double tradition: the isolationism of the Farmer-Laborites, some of them opposed even to our involvement in World War II, and the internationalist Jeffersonian strain that had come from some of the old Democrats. But with Humphrey as the candidate advocating the war, why, the traditional position was rejected and the party became simply an instrument of the national party.

Q: Isn't it odd that in 1968 the most prominent antiwar figures in politics and music were both Minnesota poets, Eugene McCarthy and Bob Dylan?

A: Well, I wasn't recognized as a poet. Dylan came out of the northern part of Minnesota, which was pretty radical: the most radical labor faction in the state was the Iron Range. Bob didn't

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do much in Minnesota politics: I'm kind of disappointed he didn't come back and campaign against Humphrey, although we didn't have a primary so there was no real showdown.

What happened to the party is that it accepted the Great Society, which was really quite foreign to the tradition of the Non-Partisan League and the Farmer-Laborites. They were not a welfare-directed political movement. It was more like the New Deal: they were going to change the structure and let welfare disappear because people didn't need it. Johnson supposedly thought he was completing the New Deal, but actually the Great Society was an abandoning of the New Deal, whose main thrust was to provide work and a decent income. The emphasis in the Great Society was we're going to have more Food Stamps and more help for the poor and more rent subsidies and more Medicaid provided by the government: I think that's where they lost it.

Q: Do you feel a kinship with an earlier generation of Midwestern and Western Progressives and Populists: the LaFollettes and Borah and Wheeler and Nye?

A: In Minnesota it was Ignatius Donnelly.

Q: The Prince of Cranks!

A: Yeah, he got a bad reputation. It's sort of like Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. I have to watch that: I can be for anything or against anything now and be irresponsible, and I think Donnelly got caught in that. He had to be for or against things automatically, especially if they were bucked mainstream politics.

Q: As far as I can tell, no major American politician writes his own speeches, let alone his own books, anymore. Should this concern us?

A: I think it's a serious matter. I can see where Presidents need help, because they're writing for history. I never thought Kennedy's speechwriters were well-chosen: Sorenson, Arthur Schlesinger. When Biden's plagiarism was exposed, I was critical of him because he didn't plagiarize anything from me: the ultimate insult! He had a quotation from Bobby Kennedy, and Adam Walinsky went public and said Biden hadn't plagiarized Kennedy, he'd plagiarized Adam. It's like a surrogate mother: if the kid turns out well, she says "it's mine!" For scholars of the future, it'll be like reading T.S. Eliot and asking, "Where did he get this? Who was the ghostwriter?"

Q: You've run for President both within and without the two-party system. Where do you prefer to be?

A: John Adams said the worst thing we could have under our Constitution was politics controlled by two strong factions. There are three or four things on which the Progressives ought to be committed, but they seem indifferent. One is the federal election law, which they should have opposed in '74-'75 because it actually legalized the two-party system. You force politics into two parties, then you force it into confrontation, especially when you have an administration that can't be overthrown except every four years. The federal election law denied political freedom and set up the process by which the corporations and corporate PACs have become the dominant force in American politics.

Q: How do we break the two-party stranglehold?

A: I don't think we can get Congress to do it. Jim Buckley and I and a few others took the federal election law all the way to the Supreme Court: the New York ACLU joined us, but the liberal Democrats didn't support us. We've got a case pending in New York on my exclusion from the debates by the networks in 1992 on the grounds that this has been an assumption of political power by the networks. Television operates between two poles: greed and fear. Greed is obvious, but they're afraid of Democrats and Republicans: they may lose their licenses or be regulated.

Q: Newspapers and television and radio stations are owned today by chains and faceless conglomerates. How do we break up these concentrations?

A: Newspapers are privately owned—you run into freedom of speech—but there's nothing to keep us from limiting the ownership of television and radio licenses. Newspapers probably shouldn't be allowed to own a television station, or at least not more than one, because then they're dependent on the government.

Q: The Washington press corps never tires of boasting how fearless and independent they are. Did you find them so?

A: The *Washington Post* is practically a house organ for any administration, and it's big into telecommunications. The only way you can have freedom of speech is to have more people speaking, and I suppose that is the most serious threat to personal and political liberty in the country: the concentrated control over television and telecommunications.

And there are other things we ought to be concerned about in a free and open democratic society: the redistribution of economic power. The way I see it, the way to progress is to go to a six-hour workday.

Q: How do you do that without massive intervention by the federal government?

A: We did it in 1938, when we went to the eight-hour day, five-day week, and retirement at 65. What you've got now is a modern-day enclosure movement. Every time AT&T lays off 10,000 people, the market goes up. It's like Adam Smith: throw the serfs off the land and you'll be more productive. Old Sam Gompers in 1893 said if one man is out of work, you ought to have a redistribution of work until he's absorbed. Now we say, who cares? Put 'em on welfare.

It's unrelated, but we've come to accept the protection of income which comes from capital rather than income produced by labor. So we have to pay for government out of taxes on income and on wages, while we've progressively exempted capital. The old Progressives, the Henry George people, said the *only* things you should tax are land and capital gains.

We ought to have a capital levy on accumulated wealth. It's a better plan than taxing the next generation and the one after that: let's tax the two that are gone. Paul Mellon, in a recent book, said he didn't know how much wealth he had; he didn't even know how much was accumulated every year. We ought to call people like Paul Mellon and say, "Paul, we worry about you. You don't know how much wealth you've got: you might

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not have any. So what we're going to do is start taking it away from you until it gets down to where you recognize it. When you can count your money, Paul, raise your hand and we'll stop taking it away."

Q: You spoke in 1968 of the "militarization of American life." How have we been changed by our 50-year experience with what George Washington warned against: an "overgrown military establishment"?

A:Tocqueville warned about democracies creating a military establishment that was bigger than needed, for it becomes a republic within a republic. And that's what we have now.

Q: To some extent, isn't this the result of defense commitments made by Democrats in the 1940's?

A: I went to Congress in 1949, and we cut the defense budget before the Korean War to, I think, $16 billion a year. Then the war came on, and it went up and never came down again. The military-industrial complex was not in place in 1950: it was only after the Korean War that they put their marbles in a row. You couldn't touch them after that.

You could see the military-industrial complex developing, though, in the 1947 Defense Reorganization Act, and in the changing of the "War Department" into the "Department of Defense." I called the Pentagon and asked, how did this happen? There must have been a meeting where somebody said look, we're gonna change the name of this damn thing, because if we call it the War Department people are gonna say, "Where's the war? And if there isn't one, where are you gonna have it?" And we don't want to answer that question. So let's call it the Department of Defense because defense is unlimited. And it's true: we never declare war anymore. We just declare national defense.

And then they did away with the draft. The volunteer army is really a mercenary army. The militarists said we want an army that is there because they want to fight: they're under contract and will fight any kind of war. The liberals said, we want an army in which we don't have to fight if we don't want to; you can stay out of a war you don't like. In Desert Storm, some of the soldiers said they signed up, they have a contract, and so they gotta fight. And some of the people who might have been critical of the war said, "They signed up; they gotta fight." So it insulated a military action from any kind of social or moral judgment.

Q: You've written of "our loss of control over our foreign and military policy." What do you mean by that?

A: There was really no decision made on Desert Storm: it was kind of a happening. I suppose it started, linguistically, when Nixon called the Cambodian action an "incursion." It was the first "incursion" in history. You wonder where they get a word like that. There's no verb for incursion. You can't "incurse." In an invasion, you "invade"; an incursion, on the other hand, is an existential happening. Who, me? Who decided? It just happened. They started to call Grenada an "incursion" but it worked too well so they called it an "invasion."

Now that communism is gone, they're building up the real danger: Islamic fundamentalism! Allah is coming. I thought we'd done in Allah in Desert Storm. It's crazy. Bhutto argued that Pakistan should have a nuclear bomb, that Islam was the only major religion that didn't have the bomb. The Christians got their God and they got their bombs. The atheists have lots of bombs, but no God. The Israelis got the bomb to go along with Yahweh, but he was never very reliable, he just had tricks: blow the trumpet and the walls will fall, stop the sun in the sky. In Islam, all they had was Allah, and Allah really needed some support.

Q: You cosponsored the Immigration Act of 1965. If you knew then what you know now . . .

A: Most of what happened came later. The act anticipated immigration of about 360,000 a year, but the automatic provisions got out of control. The act's numbers were reasonable, and it did away with the traditional standards that were based on prejudice.

Q: Is there a case to be made for those standards?

A: If we're going to bring in people from strange cultures, we should do more to assimilate them. We throw them into a very complicated culture and they tend to congregate and not assimilate. This automatic stuff for family relationships: it isn't even logical. If you say the American experience is one we want people to have so they can feed it back to their own people, you ought to have people from as many families as you can. But to concentrate it in family groups: there's no feedback. Then we got into letting in refugees. We created most of them: Laotians, Cambodians . . .

Q: The chickens of empire coming home to roost.

A: That's right. The whole Cuban thing was the result of that crazy invasion. We get Cuban refugees determining policy toward Cuba and Hispanics determining policy toward Mexico.

Q: Would it be best if the Spanish-speaking regions of the country simply seceded? We're not really part of the same country, are we?

A: Well, it gets worse. Concerning Spaniards, most of them won't really learn English, and we discourage assimilation with bilingual education. In 1977 or 1978, I spoke to the International Cartoonists of the Western Hemisphere—not of the world, just of the Western Hemisphere—and a Mexican cartoonist said, what's your position on the return of the Panama Canal? I said I would do it, but to offset it you have to take Texas. He said we'll take the land but not the people. So it may be good policy to do what you said: give 'em half of Texas. We took it from you, and we'll give it back to you.

Q: Should we worry about foreign investment: for instance, German corporations buying up Iowa farmland?

A: I don't worry much about land because they can't take it away—you can expropriate it. I'm more concerned about Murdoch getting control of television stations when there's no evidence he has any concept of what America is. You give him control over things which should not be subject only to commercial standards for judging success.

In 1960, when I was campaigning for Kennedy, people won-

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dered whether Kennedy was going to send an ambassador to the Vatican. I said it wouldn't be high on my list of things he should do; I'd rather have an ambassador to General Motors, First Boston, Morgan Guaranty, AT&T, the Pentagon . . . they've got more influence on American life than the Vatican does.

Q: You have bemoaned the "personalization" of the presidency. What do you mean by that?

A: Harry Truman was the last really constitutional President. He knew when he was President and when he was Harry Truman. He had respect for the Senate in foreign policy. He knew what the House of Representatives was. He respected the role of the courts. When he attempted to take over the steel companies and was overruled by the court, he backed down, but he went to the court for a test. On the other hand, when Kennedy had trouble with the steel companies, he had the FBI and IRS call the people up and say we're going to look at your reports. Lyndon brought them into the White House, and said if you fix prices in my presence, it's all right; if you do it in Pittsburgh when I'm not there, you're violating the antitrust laws.

Q: This strange notion of the presidency as a "bully pulpit" from which to sound off about dirty movies, national malaise, etc.—is this one aspect of personalization?

A: It is. Nixon said, "I'm the moral leader of the country." Well, who the hell said so? Who ever said the President was supposed to be the moral leader?

Q: So if you had been elected in 1968, you wouldn't have used your office to campaign against free verse?

A: No, I'd concentrate on the real range of presidential responsibility. When Arthur Schlesinger defected to Bobby Kennedy from my campaign, he said I didn't have a conception of the strong presidency. He said I'd have been a President like Buchanan. That was a hell of a thing to say, because nobody knows what Buchanan was like. If he'd said I'd be like Grant, why, it means I'd have been a drunk, but you say Buchanan and everybody imagines the worst. Four or five years later Schlesinger wrote the book on the imperial presidency. Poor Arthur: he's got energy; he never quits.

When Arthur defected, I said his defection is like a mistletoe blowing out of a beech tree in a slight wind. Some reporter said mistletoe is a parasite, isn't it? Well, I said, I hadn't really thought of that, but it's one of the worst parasites. So the guy wrote that I had called Arthur the ultimate parasite!

Arthur is the compleat historian: he wrote the Age of Jackson after it was over; he wrote the Age of Roosevelt while it was in progress; and he wrote the Age of Kennedy in advance.

Q: Political reporters were befuddled by your habit of quoting Chesterton. Would you describe your politics as distributist?

A: Part of it is distributist. I used him in opposition to the federal election law and the reform of Congress. He said that the Puritans always kill St. George but keep the dragon: that's Common Cause. The distributism of Belloc and Chesterton is not quite pertinent today. They had an idea of small shops and plots of land; we need distribution now in communications, politics, work.

Q: What do you make of the restoration of Richard Nixon's reputation?

A: I say just let him rest. I've always thought the worst thing he did was not Watergate, it was the enemies list. To use the power of the FBI and IRS to persecute people, to "teach them a lesson," was essentially fascist.

Q: In the 1960's, the Democrats had men—you, Senator Fulbright, Senator Russell—who understood that there were limits to power, both at home and abroad. Do you see any current Democrats in that same tradition?

A: Sam Nunn seemed to have some idea of what to do with the military-industrial complex, but most of it was supportive. He was like Henry Jackson: a force but not for good. They moved in when Jackson died: they had to have another "if you knew what I knew . . . " guy. I don't think Nunn quite proved out for them; they never had the influence or control on him that they had on Jackson.

Q: Is there any place for you, or people like you, in the Democratic Party of 1996?

A: I haven't been asked to speak to Democrats since 1967. In '68, we antagonized the labor movement, the Humphrey liberals, the Kennedy forces, and the standard Johnson Democrats. So there wasn't much room left in the party for us. Actually, Fulbright was an outcast in his last years.

Q: That was partly because he'd been critical of the Israel lobby, wasn't it?

A: That hurt him. That's like the Cubans influencing policy toward Cuba. I thought the high point was when Danny Inouye put in money for a university, and they said we don't want it: he's doing too much for us. Like that old Zukor book, *Don't Say Yes Until I Stop Talking*.

Q: My guess is that you're the only presidential candidate in recent years who would repeal several constitutional amendments.

A: I'm pretty skeptical of every amendment adopted after the antislavery amendments.

Q: What about the direct election of senators?

A: You have to have direct election because there's hardly any relationship between the way state legislators think now and the way senators ought to be thinking. Part of the problem is that party politics has been taken over by governors. They change the dates of the primaries not to provide for a more open politics but to get more control. For example, moving the New Hampshire primary up to mid-February, when I had made the case that the time for it was March 15th, when the sap was rising in the maple trees and the New Hampshire people were awake. February is the month in which human life is at its lowest ebb. The mind slows down and the body slows down—there's been no good results since 1968. ◁©▷

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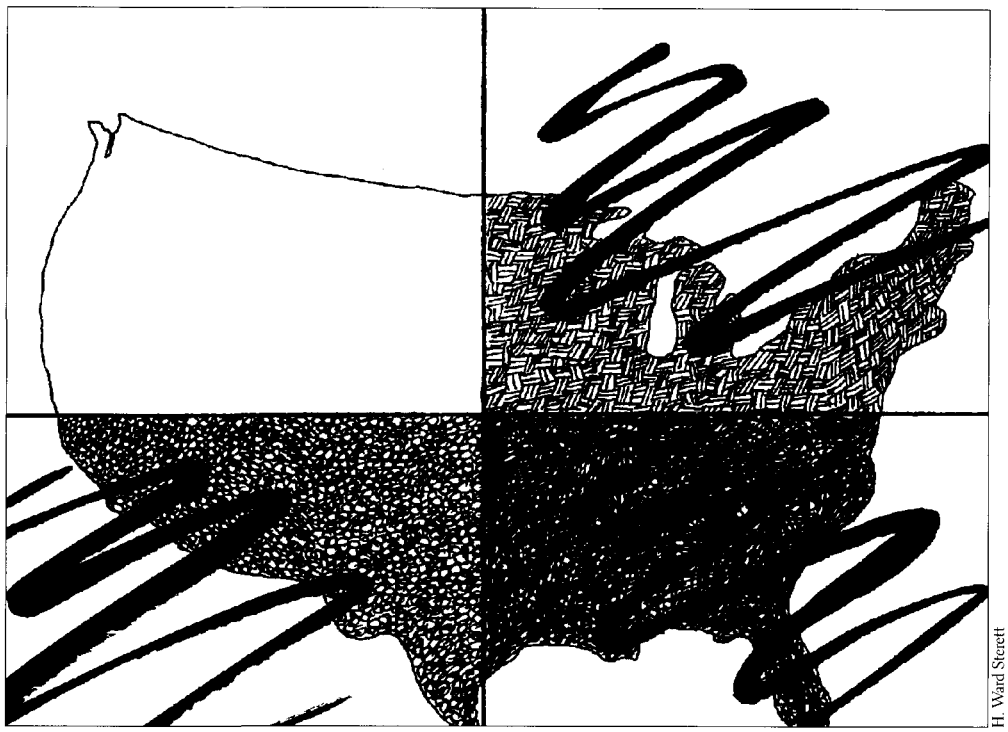
A 28th Amendment

Democracy and Constitutional Change

by William J. Quirk and Robert M. Wilcox



H. Ward Sterett

How different this country would be if we had a 28th Amendment which read: "An amendment approved by the legislatures of three-fourths of the States shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of this Constitution." Three-fourths of the states, if they desired, would then be able to change the Constitution without the approval of Congress and without a convention. This simple change would fundamentally alter American democracy. The people would be encouraged to come up with new solutions to our problems. Certainly we would have term limits and balanced budget amendments. We probably would not have federal judges supervising law enforcement and running state schools, prisons, and mental institutions. Nor would we have the unelected Supreme Court determining basic social and economic doctrine. Under the 28th Amendment, we could restore basic principles of federalism and return to a government which better reflects the values of the governed.

The merits of various proposed constitutional amendments are widely debated, but there is little talk about the amending process itself. That process, however, more than the substance of any proposed amendment, defines the nature of our democracy. Our democracy is one in which the people ultimately must determine the power and authority of the federal government. It follows that the people need to be able to amend the Constitution without—as presently required—first having to obtain the consent of the government they are supposed to be controlling. The current amendment mechanism, which led Lord Bryce to conclude in his 1888 study *The American Commonwealth* that "The Constitution which it is the most difficult to change is that of the United States," is a strange compromise from the last days of the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. It reflects the unresolved differences between the Virginians, represented by James Madison, and the Hamiltonians—differences, of course, which remain unresolved today.

The Constitution currently provides for two methods of amendment: in one, Congress, by a two-thirds vote of both houses, may propose an amendment to the states that will become effective when three-fourths of the states ratify it—all 27 amendments have been adopted this way; in the other, Congress, upon application of two-thirds of the states, "shall call a convention which" may propose an amendment to the states which will become effective when three-fourths of the states ratify it. Under the first method, because Congress must propose the amendment, it is unreasonable to expect any reduction of congressional powers or the powers of the other two national branches. In the second method, Congress "calls" the convention, but the Constitution does not specify how the convention is to be organized or what powers it will have. Congress, in the call, has to provide for shaping the convention. The shape Congress gives it will, of course, affect the convention's ultimate success or failure.

George Washington, in urging the adoption of the proposed Constitution in 1789, highlighted the "constitutional door"

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through which the people could amend the document. But, in operation, the Constitution has been very hard to change. Washington's "door" has been a narrow passage because the failure to obtain two-thirds of the members of each house of Congress to approve the proposed amendment has, so far, ended the amendment process. Congress has proven a jealous guard at the door to constitutional amendment, always reluctant, after the earliest days of the republic, to propose any amendment for the consideration of the states that might limit Congress' own powers. Of course, the fact that the Constitution is hard to change has opened an opportunity for the Supreme Court to twist and shape the document, as Jefferson said, as an artist shapes a ball of wax. Woodrow Wilson, in his 1908 book *Congressional Government*, noted that "The process of formal amendment was made so difficult by the provisions of the Constitution itself that it has seldom been feasible to use it; and the difficulty of formal amendment has understandably made the courts more liberal, not to say lax, in their interpretation than they would otherwise have been." The Court's interpretations have almost always added powers to the national government.

The recent odysseys of two proposed constitutional amendments, one successful after a journey nearly as old as the Republic itself and the other unsuccessful after a far more abbreviated existence, show how the present system—dependent on congressional action—thwarts the wishes of the governed. The most recent constitutional amendment, the 27th, was ratified in 1992 and prohibits a pay raise in Congress from taking effect until after an intervening election. Proposed by the First Congress in 1789 at the behest of James Madison as part of the original Bill of Rights, the amendment was ratified by six states by 1791 and then lay dormant for nearly two centuries. But in 1989, after Congress voted itself a 25 percent pay raise, the sleeper awakened. Thirty-eight states quickly ratified the Madison amendment, and it became part of the Constitution. Because of the historical quirk that the First Congress proposed the amendment without limiting the time allowed for its consideration, the American people were able to change the Constitution without having first to obtain the consent of the modern Congress, which was enjoying its pay raise.

By comparison, recent opinion polls show overwhelming public sentiment favoring a Balanced Budget Amendment. Nevertheless, Congress has consistently refused to send the amendment to the states for their consideration. Last year, the amendment was approved by a two-thirds vote of the House of Representatives, but failed by one vote to get two-thirds of the Senate. Senator Craig of Idaho, late in the debate, emphasized that the Senate was not being asked to "pass a balanced budget amendment; it was being asked to propose" the amendment to the "citizens of the country." He noted that the senators who voted against proposing the amendment "said very clearly under all of the smokescreen and all of the excuses that they gave for not voting for it—there were two fundamental things. They did not believe in the right of the states to control their central government, and they would not give the citizens of these states the right to choose that option. I think that is profound, and it is sad." Similarly, Congress has refused to forward any term limit amendment to the states for their consideration.

The alternative of proposing an amendment by convention has proven itself to be only of marginal practical value. Supporters of two amendments, the 17th, direct election of Senators (1913), and the 19th, women's suffrage (1920), did campaign for a convention. As the number of states applying for a convention approached the necessary two-thirds, Congress, to avoid the uncertainty of the convention route, bowed to the popular will and proposed the amendments under the first method. The states then ratified.

More recently, proponents of term limits, following their five-to-four defeat in the Supreme Court, have announced a campaign to get the 34 state applications necessary to require Congress to call a convention. They have accused Congress of a "clear conflict of interest" in failing to propose such an amendment. "No one sees a way to get term limits without states beginning to apply for a term-limit convention," said Paul Jacobs, executive director of U.S. Term Limits. Because of Congress' refusal to propose the amendment, term limits advocates are forced into the awkward position of calling for a convention they do not really want, in the hope that the process will again prod Congress into proposing an amendment.

A new, third method of constitutional amendment is needed that will bypass altogether the requirement for congressional approval or a congressional call for a convention.

Because of uncertainty over how the convention would be organized and what its powers would be, however, the second method is not a practical alternative to an obstinate Congress. Congress continues to play a key role in the process, having been given the sole authority to call a convention. Because the Constitution does not specify how the call is to be made and what directions it should contain, a reluctant Congress may well establish methods of delegate selection or define the scope of the convention so as to reduce the chances for approval of any amendment unsatisfactory to Congress. Madison criticized the "vagueness" of the language during the 1787 Convention: "How was a Convention to be formed? By what rule decided? What the force of its acts?" Madison's questions remain unanswered. A hostile Congress, in calling the convention, could easily take advantage of the vague language to impose procedures that indirectly sink the amendment.

A new, third method of constitutional amendment is needed that will bypass altogether the requirement for congressional approval or a congressional call for a convention. By allowing the states, without the approval of Congress, to control the amendment of the Constitution, we could restore the bargain between the states and the federal government that was the heart of the initial constitutional structure. Any state could propose an amendment, such as one providing term lim-

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its, and, if three-fourths of the states agreed to the language, the amendment would become a part of the Constitution. The people, acting through their states, would be able, through an orderly and manageable process, to reclaim powers previously granted to, or assumed by, the federal government.

Constitutional reform under this proposal would remain a deliberative process. The only change is the recognition of who wields ultimate control over the process. By allowing the states to consider constitutional amendments that have not been approved by Congress, we would alter fundamentally the existing relationship between the national government and the people. At the same time, we would restore the type of constitutional door envisioned by Washington and Madison at America's birth. Since all just power is derived from the consent of the governed, the Constitution should be subject to amendment whenever the people believe the national government has aggrandized power and abused it. The states, after all, are closer to the people and more likely to reflect the values of the governed.

Why is federal control over the amendment process only now, after more than 200 years, manifesting itself as a problem? There are two answers. First, as long as state law controlled many of the important issues of the day, any deficiencies in the federal constitutional amendment mechanism were of little concern. As the federal government has asserted constitutional authority, however, to control more and more fundamental social and economic issues in the past several decades, shifting the original constitutional bargain at the expense of the states, the issue of who controls the Constitution itself has become more immediate and vital. Second, although the deficiencies of the current system may only now have become critically urgent, the vital role of the amendment process in determining the balance of power in the federal system was clearly understood by the drafters more than 200 years ago. Reports of the Constitutional Convention suggest that the current amendment process was agreed upon only out of political necessity and that the leading figures of that day recognized precisely that it would give tremendous power to the central government.

The loss of state influence over the shaping of significant social and economic policies is a phenomenon of the past 30 years. The states started to decline in influence during the period of the civil rights movement. "States' rights" became associated with efforts to sustain the segregationist laws of the South, and any effort to assert the influence of the state in shaping matters of policy became "racist." State government has since been relegated to the role of a largely irrelevant anachronism on the political landscape. Social and economic policies are now shaped by Presidents and by federal courts and legislatures, with little meaningful input from the states. The variety of debate at the local level has given way to a single debate—carried on in a strange language—at the national level. The opportunity for creative solutions to arise at a local or state level is sacrificed in the move toward central authority. The states, if power were restored to them, could provide 50 potential solutions to national problems instead of one. Some solutions would, of course, prove better than others. But at least the states provide a proving ground for experimentation, with successes verified and mistakes identified, before the entire nation is led down the wrong path.

The content of the national debate has come to reflect less and less the values of the governed. Frustration with the course of policies pursued by the federal government and the inability to alter that course has led the American public to question whether the authority of the federal government is subject to the will of the people. Much energy has been spent during the past decade to devise mechanisms that would limit the influence and access of special interest groups in the federal forum, in the hope that such efforts might restore the responsiveness of government to the wishes of the governed. But those efforts have been largely in vain. We cannot correct the perceived abuses by lobbyists unless we recognize that they are rooted in the growth of the federal government and its regulatory powers and the withering of any countervailing power.

The 1994 elections offer some hope that through the electoral process the majority can still demand the attention of their representatives in the legislature. But the federal power is bureaucratic and judicial, as well as legislative, and the majority has yet to find responsiveness in many of the most powerful halls of federal government. The solution to the current unresponsiveness of the federal government is not a simple matter of securing greater access to the federal system; we shall also have to restore the fundamental balance of American federalism and return to the governed the ability, acting collectively through their states, to control the development of fundamental national social and economic policies.

The idea is not a new one. Indeed, history tells us that a method for amendment without congressional approval very nearly became a part of the original Constitution. The Articles of Confederation had required that Congress first agree to any amendment, which then had to be unanimously approved by the states. When the 1787 Philadelphia Convention met, it had to decide (1) if the Constitution was to be amendable and (2) if it was, how it was. The first question was easily decided since, as *Federalist No. 78* put it, it is a "fundamental principle of republican government which admits the right of the people to alter or abolish the established Constitution." But the second question split the convention along its basic philosophical fault line. Gouverneur Morris wrote in an 1811 letter to Robert Walsh that the convention turned on "the necessity of drawing a line between national sovereignty and State independence . . . 'that, if Aaron's rod could not swallow the rods of the Magicians, their rod would swallow his.'"

James Madison, as he approached the Philadelphia Convention, emphasized the need to allow the states to limit the federal government without the consent of Congress, and he came within two days of having that authority included in the Constitution. The Virginia Delegation to the convention was clear from the start that amendments should be made whenever "necessary" and that Congress should have *no* role in the amending process. The Virginia Plan, written by James Madison and introduced on May 29, 1787, argued in Resolution 13 "that provision ought to be made for the amendment of the Articles of Union whensoever it shall seem necessary, and that the assent of the National Legislature ought not to be required thereto."

The Virginians believed the states created the union and by the Constitution delegated express and enumerated powers to the federal government. In addition, power at the federal level was divided, with the executive, legislative, and judiciary powers to be separately and independently exercised. Madison and Jefferson believed they had created a federal government with limited powers. If the central government started to exceed its

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powers, the states, by amendment, could call it back. Of course, the government exceeding its powers would not consent to limit itself.

The Hamiltonians, on the other hand, believed that Congress should control the amendment process. Alexander Hamilton insisted on congressional approval of proposed amendments or the calling of a new Convention because of his basic bias in favor of a strong central government, and had no doubt that the states would use the amendment process to increase their power. As he told the Convention on June 22, 1787, "state government will ever be the rival power of the general government." He intended that the states, once they created the national government, would not be able to control it.

Hamilton was correct that the amendment process would determine the nature of the central government. The harder to amend, the stronger the central government created; the easier to amend, the weaker the federal government and the more responsive it would have to be to the governed. By amendment, any decision of the national government—by the Supreme Court, Congress, or the executive—can be modified or overruled. Any power claimed by the national government can be reclaimed by the states and people. The amendment process was, therefore, a critical battlefield in the war between the Virginians and the Hamiltonians. It remains so today.

When the Virginia Plan came to the convention floor, Madison noted that "several members did not see the necessity of the Resolution at all nor the propriety of making the consent of the National Legislature unnecessary." Colonel George Mason of Virginia responded that amendment was a necessary alternative to revolution and noted: "It would be improper to require the consent of the Natl. Legislature, because they may abuse their power, and refuse their consent on that very account." After the initial debate, the Committee on Detail proposed that "On the application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the States in the Union, for an amendment of this Constitution, the Legislature of the United States shall call a Convention for that purpose." This seems to have been a mangled attempt to compromise the differences between the Virginians and the nationalists. The proposed article, on the surface, provided for a state-initiated procedure in which the congressional role seems ministerial, i.e., that it "shall call a Convention for that purpose." The problem, of course, was that the congressional role would not be purely ministerial since, by the call, Congress could control how it would be made up, how it would operate, and what the convention could do.

The Virginians apparently realized the problems built into the proposed article since the next version corrected them. The Committee on Style reported a new article providing that "Congress, whenever two-thirds of both Houses shall deem necessary, or on the application of two-thirds of the Legislatures of the several States, shall propose amendments to this Constitution." The language required that Congress send to the states for ratification any amendment proposed by two-thirds of the states. At this point, Gouverneur Morris of New York and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts moved to change the state-initiated method to require Congress to call a convention rather than simply pass the proposed amendment to the states for their consideration. The added requirement of a convention changed the state-initiated procedure from a straightforward one controlled by the states to one so uncertain and complicated that it has never been used. Madison accepted the Morris-Gerry motion. The states' ability to propose amendments was effectively eliminated.

Madison knew that the last-minute Morris-Gerry motion seized from the Virginia delegation a victory almost within its grasp. But, as George Washington wrote two days later, "The Constitution, which we now present, is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable." The Virginians had to compromise for what they saw as the greater good.

But they certainly would not have agreed with the Federalist Supreme Court Justice, Joseph Story, who praised Article V as an effective "safety valve" in his 1833 treatise, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*. The "efficacy of a safety valve," responded the 19th century scholar Sidney Fisher, "depends on the promptness with which it can be opened and the width of the throttle. If defective in either of these, when the pressure of steam is too high the boiler will burst." Article V, Fisher concluded, is an "iron fetter" rather than a safety valve. The heart of the problem, of course, is the self-defeating consent mechanism which requires the body to be limited to agree that it should be limited.

Only in America, Tocqueville wrote in 1835, have the people acknowledged the right of judges to declare laws unconstitutional. In France, the constitution is supposed to be immutable, and the received theory is that no power has the right to change any part of it. In England, the constitution changes continually, or, in reality, does not exist, because Parliament is at once a legislative and constituent assembly. Whatever it enacts is constitutional.

French judges, on the surface, have more power than American judges, since they have the right, and they alone have the right, to interpret a constitution which cannot be amended. But as Tocqueville notes, were they to exercise the right to declare laws unconstitutional, they would encroach on rights more sacred than their own, namely those of the society in whose name they are acting. "[N]o danger of this kind is to be feared" in America, Tocqueville concluded, because "the nation can always reduce its magistrates to obedience by changing its Constitution." However, Tocqueville turned out to be wrong; because of our flawed amendment process, Americans are *not* able to reduce magistrates to obedience.

Madison in *Federalist No. 43* wrote that a Constitution could be too "mutable," on the one hand, or, on the other, so hard to change that we "perpetuate its discovered faults." A constitution that cannot be made to conform to the values of the governed may lead to revolution. A new constitutional convention, while it may lack the violence, terror, purges, and guillotines of a revolution, certainly threatens, and could produce, a different society. Most people do not want a revolution or a new constitutional convention. But they do believe that basic revisions of the Constitution could bring Congress and the Court under control. The patch, Jefferson said, should fit the hole, and the proper patch in this case is the state-initiated amending process which Madison originally proposed.

Jefferson wrote that the basis of our experiment is that "men may be trusted to govern themselves without a master." Madison said that all "our experiments rest on the capacity of mankind for self-government." If they are wrong, America is wrong. Self-government means the citizen is free to act, and the Madison version of Article V allows for such freedoms. If three-fourths of the states want to change the Constitution, they should be able to do so.

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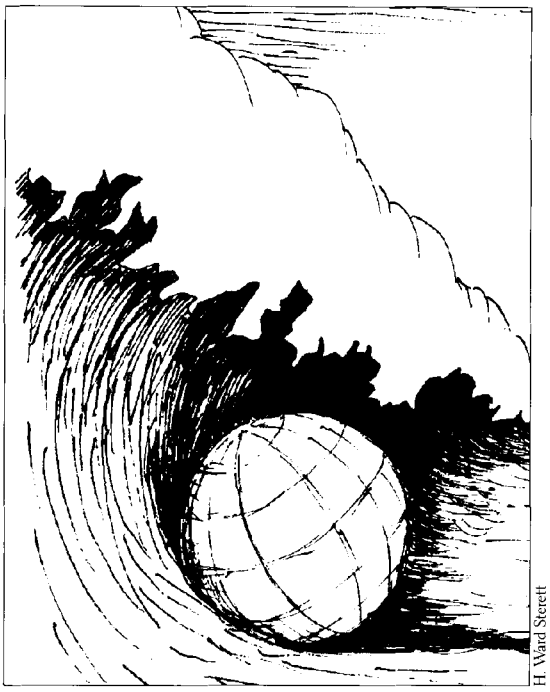
Whither the Populist Wave

by Paul Gottfried



For at least a decade, a changing political climate has been upsetting the media and the practitioners of politics as usual. Populist movements have been spreading through the West under such names as the Lega Nord (Italy), the National Front (France), Freiheitliche Partei (Austria), the Reform Party (Canada), and Pat Buchanan's American Cause. Though there are critical differences among these movements, their shared characteristics seem more important. All of them attack elitist impersonal bureaucracy and treat established parties as shills for special interests. As the onetime theoretician of the Lega Nord, Gianfranco Miglio, points out, Italy has ceased to be a country and has become instead a "corrupt feudal arrangement," run by party bosses and their administrative lackeys.

Populist movements feature charismatic leaders (an exception being the emaciated, bespectacled head of the Canadian Reform Party, Preston Manning). Whether the Frenchman Jean-Marie Le Pen, the Lombard Umberto Bossi, the Austrian Jörg Haider, or the American Pat Buchanan, the people's self-described spokesmen rail against "undemocratic" forces, particularly self-described democratic governments which insulate themselves against the popular will. Like their late 19th-century counterparts, today's populists appeal to identitarian democracy. *Real* democracy, they insist, is about self-identified communities being governed by ancestral wisdom. Democracy is not about being "sensitive," as social planners and behavior-modifiers believe; nor is it about keeping one's borders perpetually open to newcomers who may fundamentally change the societies they enter.

Among populist advocates, Pat Buchanan has elicited the most widespread and most panicky responses. Usually serious journalists have compared him to Adolf Hitler, and hardly an hour goes by without a public personality warning against his "racism," "anti-Semitism," or "Catholic authoritarian personality." All such diatribes contain gross exaggeration or outright lies, but they do fit a widely shared and not entirely fictive view of populism. Some of the most frightened antipopulists are Jewish and assume a necessary link between culturally conservative majoritarianism and anti-Semitism.

In response to this fear, based partly on true memories from other times and places, Jews have associated their safety, as Benjamin Ginsberg and Stanley Rothman note, with highly centralized bureaucratic government and with anticlerical politics. And one contemporary populist movement, the National Front, has solidified Jewish liberal opposition by responding to its Jewish critics with brutal ridicule. In the last nine years, the Front's leaders have gone out of their way to insult Jewish sensitivities, as an expression of contempt for those they believe are defaming them. Despite this fighting, in which Jewish groups have called on the French state to suppress the populist right, Le Pen continues to have Jewish economic advisors. He also wonders why French Jews intensely dislike him, given his resistance to Arab immigration and the fact that French Jews have been targeted by Arab terrorists.

But America is not France and does not carry its anti-Semitic baggage, which may nevertheless be exaggerated for ideological reasons. Despite abrasive remarks about AIPAC in 1991, Buchanan is not an anti-Semite. About half of his inner circle, which includes a Hasidic rabbi, is Jewish, and his praise for the

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present Israeli government is even more extravagant than was his criticism of the former Likud regime. The charge of racism leveled at Buchanan seems likewise problematic. Not only have black liberals like Juan Williams rushed to his defense, but it is also hard to find insulting comments by Buchanan about blacks (save for deviations from p.c.). The charge that some of his followers are antiblack proves little indeed. It involves a standard of conduct that liberals would hardly apply to themselves. After all, they do not hold it against Clinton that he wins with the support of outspokenly anti-Semitic black leaders. Besides, Buchanan appeals to all critics of his enemies, from Christian homeschoolers and black evangelists to white supremacists. But he has not set out to court specifically this last group, unless his kind references to Confederate bravery are given an unjustifiably sinister meaning. At the same time, Buchanan and his sister Bay have made special efforts to attract socially conservative blacks.

The media are right to fret about populists, but not for the reasons they give. For 80 years or more, democracy in Western countries has been increasingly identified with social planning and human rights agendas. Most of this democratic project has assumed a captive public, and John Gray correctly observes that for modern liberals, all political first questions must be kept out of public contention. They are questions of fundamental right or social policy, which liberals hope to see settled "prepolitically," i.e., in courts or by administrative experts. The media have benefited from this arrangement, by becoming powerful guardians of "liberal democracy." They set the parameters of "sensitive" political discourse and bully politicians and judges into accepting their private opinions. They also pretend that their undemocratic will is what the people really want. They are therefore free to ignore the discrepancy between their own social morality and what most people seem to believe. And despite their astronomic salaries and defense of entrenched bureaucratic power, as S. Robert Lichter proves in *The Media Elite*, media personalities and journalists think of themselves as threatened champions of the dispossessed.

Populist leaders delight in going after such pretensions. They ridicule journalists and mediacrats as royalists and, in the savage phrase of Sam Francis, "the priesthood of the managerial state." Most distressingly for their verbalizing enemies, populist parties are no longer on the electoral fringe. In France, Italy, and Austria, their candidates win between 15 and 40 percent of the votes cast in national elections. In Italy, both regional populists and neofascists have entered ruling coalitions, and there the measures aimed at restricting immigration and parliamentary discussion about a decentralized Italian federal government underscore the impact of populist politics.

Despite the electoral rise of populism, counterrevolutionary democrats must still define themselves coherently. They are still in some cases driven by those reactions that pushed them into prominence. In trying to woo protest electorates, at least some populist leaders too often oscillate between opposing stands. They talk about overthrowing the administrative state while promising social programs and federal bans on abortion. The same inconsistency plagues both Buchanan's campaign and the National Front. Ten years ago Le Pen, who was then focusing on a largely upper-middle-class and professional electorate, favored *détatisation* and a French federal administration restricted to listed and specific tasks. By now, as the French historian Franklin Adler demonstrates, the *lepénistes* have gone from presenting themselves as opponents of crime and immigration to replacing the collapsing French left, as *protectors* of social pensions. Though populists have recruited a blue-collar base by appealing to traditionalist themes, they have also won this base in France and now in the United States by imitating socialists.

But can they play this card without surrendering even more power to an elite they claim to despise? And though one can make an impeccably communitarian argument for trade protection, as Le Pen and Buchanan have done, would such a policy leave a federal administration subservient to popular control? It is hard to see this happening, even if NAFTA and GATT are as flawed as Buchanan suggests. And would Buchanan, by turning over the matter of abortion to the federal government in his best-case scenario, be resisting Washington? This does not seem likely, when the constitutional alternative is having state legislatures decide a morally divisive issue.

Populists are also struggling to define identity in a future populist regime. Here, difficult choices must be made. A regionally based populism, as advocated by Northern Italian and Austrian populists, cannot be the same as a nationalist populist movement, as illustrated by the American Cause, the F.N., or the Reform Party in Canada. Some populist leaders fudge the issue, by trying to have it both ways. Buchanan, for example, has defended the use of the Confederate flag and celebrated his own Confederate ancestors while campaigning in the South; he has then turned around and made Lincolnesque speeches about a tightly unified American nation, whose federal administration will be asked to protect family morality. In Canada, Manning has championed Anglophone minorities in Quebec while calling for a stronger federal government; he has then denounced administrative overreach and promised to end it.

Outside of the well-educated and predominantly upper-middle-class Northern League and Freiheitliche Partei, most populists have blinked a question that will not go away. Is a retreat from administrative overreach possible without structural change? The answer seems to be no: unless citizens have a sense of who they are and some way of reining in government, the populist turn will not likely lead anywhere. Regional populism, it may be argued, is the only kind that can provide a counterweight to public administration. The smaller the region, as Aristotle taught, the more thoroughly will the inhabitants resemble an extended household.

But there are circumstances working against the regional option in the United States. With a mobile population, national communications network, and an international economy, it may be hard to recreate the kind of regional solidarity needed to curb federal administrators and federal judges. It is also questionable whether the states can be made to play such a role. They, too, have footloose inhabitants, a dwindling cultural sense, and administrations which are often mere imitations of their federal masters. Appeals to the Tenth Amendment and dual federalism may hold off federal power from time to time, but without a self-identified regional base, states and collections of states will not long resist central authorities.

Without a plan for getting these authorities off our backs, American populists nonetheless try to pursue identitarian politics. Given the diversity of the "American people," this has not been easy; and for want of another tie that can bind, religion for the time being has become the foundational identity around which Buchananites rally. They speak of cultural wars to be

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waged on behalf of Christian or biblical values that the liberal left scorns and seeks to remove from public life. We are also warned to protect ourselves against a New World Order, which threatens an identity that is treated as more or less apodictic. The reality is far messier. The identity being assumed is far from obvious to most voters who, if the polls are accurate, care more about material concerns than either national sovereignty or moral identity. Though cultural issues have intrinsic importance, in the United States they are still attached to what is only a protest movement. Unlike the populism of the 1890's, rooted in the Plains and in the South, today's populists do not have a regional base or even a memory of decentralized government.

My point is not to run down the only populist alternative Americans have thus far been able to rear up against the federal behemoth. Despite its defects, this populism does provide an insurgency against rule by "buzzing fax machines in D.C." Its representatives, moreover, raise a critical question about citizenship: whether authentic democracy is compatible with having citizens socialized by those who are supposed to be their servants. The populists keep reminding us that there is an honorable democratic right to reject immigration and seal one's borders. On all these points and more, the Buchananites have challenged the "prepolitical" paradigm of democracy. The managerial state under which we and they live has not brought about the "end of ideology." Instead, it has given us thought control, together with soaring public debts and growing dependence on the public sector. For all of their flailing about, Buchanan and his followers at least know what ails our political life.

But American populists must move beyond mere protest politics. They will have to come up with something else for what they intend to replace, and this will be a far more arduous task then sparring with overwrought journalists or responding to Bill Safire's hyperboles. In Milan, a committee of legal and constitutional scholars undertook in 1981 to draft regional alternatives to the Italian republic. Their completed work has served as the blueprint for a constitutional proposal in which historical regions are to be given back a high degree of self-government. Right now the Italian assembly is considering this proposal. Though an Italian project cannot be wholly transferred to the American context, it does suggest possibilities for an improved American populism. Like Italian populists, American ones should insist that true self-government can only work territorially. It is about devolution of power—and not about conquering the world for a "democratic" empire. It is also about citizens controlling their own population, as opposed to the ideal of open borders. In a recent syndicated column, Ben Wattenberg accused Buchanan (and by implication, his followers) of being "a democracy trasher feasting on the fruits of democracy." The best response is not a sneer but the initiation of a public debate about the meaning of democracy. Buchanan's respectful opponents are inviting him to engage in such a discussion, and the presentation of views, if one is to be given, should be worthy of the occasion.

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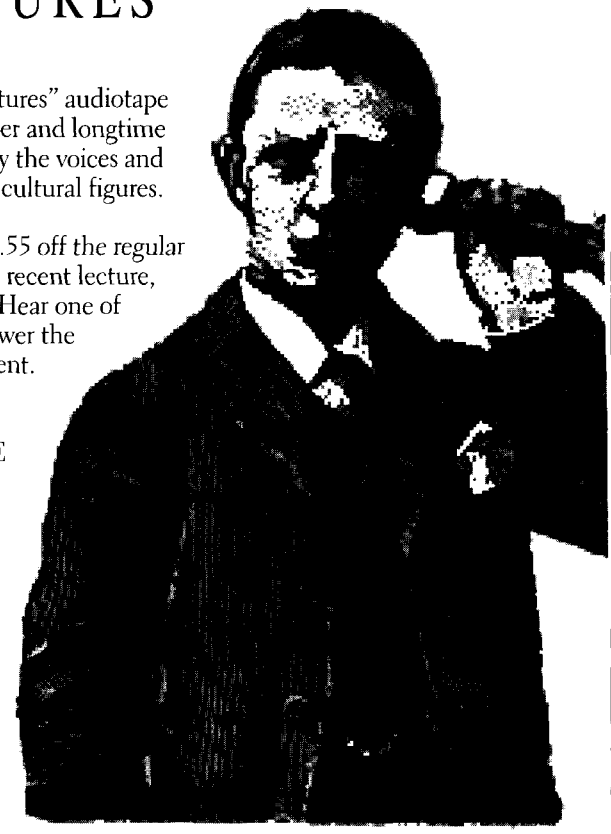

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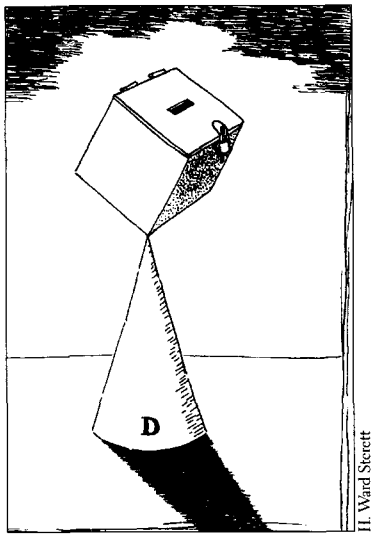
Why Americans Shouldn't Vote

by David Mastio



Everyone is sure the American political system is broken, but no one wants to blame the people in charge. James Fallows has his nifty little book blaming the press; Howard Kurtz blames our talk show culture; *Frontline* and The Center for Public Integrity point to our corrupt campaign finance system; conservatives tout their all-purpose reform, term limits; and yet in none of these diagnoses is there any blame for the folks who run the Washington asylum: voters.

What we need to fix Washington is not a little more tinkering with the inside-the-Beltway system. We need a little tinkering outside—voter reform. The problem is twofold: voters are ignorant and corrupt.

The *Washington Post*'s recent "Reality Check" series put the problem into sharp focus. Forty-eight percent of Americans do not know which party is more conservative and which is more liberal. Now, it is clear that labels have their limits, but is there any excuse for not knowing where Gingrich and Gephardt stand on the political spectrum? Forty-six percent do not know the purpose of the Supreme Court. Forty percent do not know who the Vice President is—Jay Leno's constant barrage of jokes notwithstanding. It is true that the vast majority of these potential voters are not registered, but in almost all races the ignorant vote is larger than the difference between the winner and the loser.

Want an explanation for the whipsaw difference between the '92 election, the '94 election, and the dismal outlook for Republicans today? Call it the clueless effect. A good chunk of the American electorate has not the faintest idea what is going on in Washington, but a vague unease filtered through half-heard snatches of the evening news, drive-time updates, and watercooler conversation has led them to the conclusion that those in power are screwing things up. So they're mad. And distrustful. And by the election results, vengeful toward those who have failed them. But the last thing anyone inside Washington wants to do is blame the voters. They are, after all, the victims of this corrupt system.

Many commentators complain that Americans are of two minds—they simultaneously want a balanced budget *and* their benefits protected. The fact may be more simple, for Americans are not bipolar. Instead, there are two *groups* of Americans: one wants the deficit controlled and the debt reduced, while the other only says it does, but whines—and votes—to protect its piece of pork.

It is this second group, Americans who talk of balanced budgets to pollsters and vote to defend their piece of the government pie that is as corrupt as any in Washington. At least here we have legal protections from those in Washington with a conflict of interest (no matter how infrequently they may be enacted) and punishment for those who break the public faith. But from the corrupt voters, we have no similar safeguards.

Alexis de Tocqueville's analysis of American democracy in the 19th century has become the basis for many Republican plans to reshape government. However, many have forgotten Tocqueville's warning about the darker side of democracy: that when Americans discover that they can vote themselves largess from the public treasury, democracy is doomed.

Today more and more Americans are doing just that. They have their hands out and receive fat grants for simply doing nothing or doing things they would already do; all the reform plans on the table will not change this fact. Add them up—students, the elderly, the poor, the disabled, farmers, and a host of smaller constituencies—and together they are more than a majority, and their numbers grow relative to the rest of the population. They all have a legitimate claim on our compassion and our help. But they all have a massive conflict of interest. A congressman in a similar situation would do five to ten.

Moreover, the trend is to place far more power into the hands of exactly the groups that know the least and reap personal gain from their votes. Take "Motor Voter Registration," for example. Registration is now available in far more government offices, including where the dole's denizens go to pick up their unearned checks. Though the law was passed in 1993, only now are the last states beginning to comply. Or "Vote by

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David Mastio is an editorial board member of USA Today *and would have been a victim of his own proposal last year.*

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Mail"; in Oregon, the recent Senate campaign broke records for special elections, by spreading the voting over a month and allowing votes to be mailed in. Or campus registration. Youth Vote '96 was holding seminars last winter on how to get out young voters, and among the topics discussed was how to get universities to allow voter registration with class registration. Already they have met with success on a number of large campuses. MTV and MCI are pushing to register young voters via the Internet. Meanwhile, author Andrew Shapiro is arguing to return more voting rights to convicted felons.

The only arguments Republicans can come up with are that Motor Voter is an unfunded mandate and that voting by mail is prone to fraud. Big deal. Both those problems can be fixed or, at least, tempered. The issue is that voting is a serious responsibility, and people who cannot accept that responsibility should not be allowed to vote.

Who would argue that a Supreme Court Justice who did not show up for the oral arguments and did not read the briefs should vote on a case? Who would argue that a federal regulator should rule on an issue which affects his personal finances? No one. And national elections are no less important because the voting power is more dispersed.

Qualifications for voting are controversial, and for good reason. They have been abused in the past to disenfranchise people based solely on race. Ultimately, though, qualifications are a tool, and like any other tool can be used for good or ill.

The first qualification to vote is basic knowledge. All it would take is two questions administered in the booth at the top of the ballot, and they would not have to be in Chinese to disqualify scads of voters: "Who are the two (or three?) major party candidates running for office?" and "To what parties do they each belong?"

Among the most common complaints about the way political campaigns work is the pervasiveness and power of negative ads. On whom do these ads work most effectively? On committed party stalwarts? On responsible voters who read newspaper stories regularly debunking the ads as false? Or on people who feel compelled to vote because it's the "responsible thing to do," but fail to put in the time following the race, the issues, and the candidates? A knowledge qualification sends those well-meaning but ill-informed folks back to the sidelines with a message: voting is only part of the responsibility. Judging from the *Washington Post*'s survey, those two questions posed above might eliminate half the number of registered voters.

The second qualification to vote is to be a contributor to the government's coffers. Those taking any kind of government grant should be disqualified. How can anyone learn responsibility if food, a roof, health care, and a small income are *rights*? No American wants to deny these basic needs to anyone, but people have sacrificed to provide them, and those with their hand out must give something back. A vote is a small but significant symbol of sharing the sacrifice.

The *Post*'s series focused significantly on the growing distrust of Americans for their government. They sounded surprised to find this distrust among all classes of people. They should not have been—the past 50 years of democratic rule have undermined the original purpose of our government—to provide *public* goods. Simply defined, a public good, once produced, is consumed by everyone, even those who did not pay for it. Because those who consume do not have to pay, market forces do not provide these goods. Thus governments were formed to provide them, such as national defense, police protection, and, more recently, clean air.

In 1950, more than 90 percent of federal dollars went to providing public goods. Today, barely a third of the federal budget goes to such purposes. So in half a century, the federal government has gone from a source of public goods—shared expenses and shared benefits—to a source of private goods.

Those who do not share in the largess feel cheated and thus distrustful of the leviathan that lays claim to so much of their wealth. Those who receive the government's bounty are afraid it could stop without warning. They are distrustful because they have little say in what may happen to them tomorrow. Neither feeling is surprising, but both arise from the fundamental change in the federal government's focus. This pervasive distrust allows Democrats to sow envy among one group and Republicans to sow anger among the other. And the rank suspicion makes it all the easier to see evil intent on the other side.

Look at how this politics of personal gain has affected the federal government. It is at the feet of elderly voters that the blame for the budget impasse should rest. Clinton's appeal was strictly to those voters' private gain. In preventing Republicans from "destroying Medicare," his appeal moved voters.

This anger has changed supplicant classes—whether welfare mothers, textile workers, or farmers—into demanding classes. In 19th-century America or Victorian England, people who messed up their lives, for whatever reason, still asked for help, but it was an appeal, not an ultimatum. Victorian England and 19th-century America are in fact models for conservatives on how to deal with the destructive effects of the government's move from public to private. Some conservatives now argue for a return to shame for failings like going on the dole or out-of-wedlock births. This may help in relatively healthy parts of the country, but in some communities—particularly the "permanent" inner-city underclass—individuals who qualify but do not apply for free money are considered fools. As much as individual change can help, the government must apply the stigma of losing the right to vote, a right so symbolic of being an American.

In other communities, people do not look at their middle-class entitlements as "welfare." People who live on Social Security and Medicare largely believe they paid for it, though any actuary can tell you that this is false. Government has to look for a way to make those people feel the cost of their benefits.

Clearly, the idea of disenfranchising large swaths of the American population is a radical proposition. After all, is it not true that the more people who participate in the political process, the more vibrant our democracy, the more legitimate and representative our government—"of the people, by the people, and for the people"? But what is legitimate about a vote based on ignorance? Or one based on avarice? The argument mirrors that over welfare. Those who argue that putting a check in someone's hand solves anything are arguing for surface over substance.

Those who believe that our society is in tatters and who place a good share of the blame on government have to ask themselves why the last 50 years of history happened. In two words: voters voted. Change the dynamic, and you have changed the world; leave it alone, and the "Great Society" will flourish unabated.

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Trouble in the City

by Kenneth R. Craycraft, Jr.

"In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful."

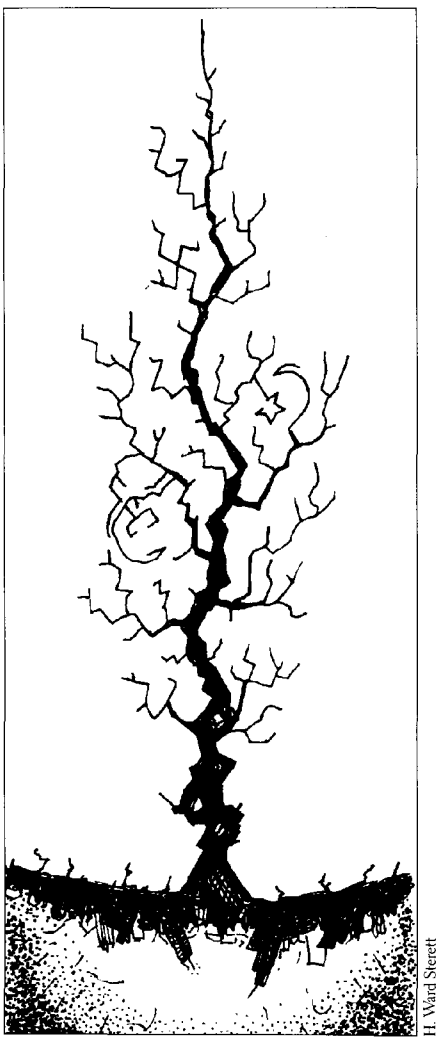
—C.S. Lewis

Democracy on Trial
by Jean Bethke Elshtain
New York: Basic Books;
153 pp., $20.00

◆

Recently named Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Social and Political Ethics at the University of Chicago, Jean Bethke Elshtain has a keen eye that sees through the haze of fashionable ideologies. In many ways *Democracy on Trial*, a series of speeches delivered in 1993, is a testament to her clarity and acuity. Elshtain's thesis is not new—that democracy is, at best, a tentative and cautious political endeavor—but she has identified some of the more pernicious maladies that infect America's democratic experiment. Among the more important diagnoses are the tendency of Americans to confuse wants with rights, the problem of political "totalism," in which every human relationship is reduced to politics, and group envy and resentment as our chief political paradigm. When these (and other) problems are manifest at once, Elshtain thinks, the temptation to despair over the lost possibility of civil society is a powerful one.

Alexis de Tocqueville's apprehension that America was inclined toward subversive individualism is well justified. As Elshtain explains, Tocqueville's fear was that "the individualism of an acquisitive commercial republic would engender new forms of social and political domination." The individualist ethos at the heart of American democracy tends toward the removal of those natural social webs which hold communities intact, leaving individuals without the thickly embodied contexts necessary for authentic moral life. "Into this power vacuum," Elshtain observes, "will likely move a top-heavy, ever more centralized state. Or we will hunker down in defensive 'lifestyle enclaves,' forbidding others entry."



H. Ward Sterett

The second reaction destroys the defining contexts that make authentic freedom possible, removing the obligation to preserve and protect the freedom of the other. Absent these obligations, modern democratic man tends to translate his wants and desires into rights and entitlements, meaning claims against other isolated rights-bearers. Without an abiding notion that individual freedom must be tempered and delimited by the demands of social interaction, every human whim becomes a divine right. This is especially (though not uniquely) seen on the political left, which sees "any restriction of individual 'freedom' or 'lifestyle option'" as "an unacceptable diminution of rights and free expression."

It soon follows, then, that every "lifestyle option," being as it is a political expression of right, collapses the private into the political. Elshtain sees this tendency arising with the radical feminism of the 1970's, in which "the personal is political. Nothing personal was exempt from political definition, direction, and manipulation—not sexual intimacy, not love, not parenting." But political "totalism," which absorbs the private into itself, also effectively eliminates authentic politics. "If there are no distinctions between . . . personal and political, it follows that there can be no differentiated activity or set of institutions that are genuinely political," notes Elshtain. And "when genuine politics ceases to exist, what rushes in to take its place is pervasive force, coercion and manipulation," since authentic politics is rooted in reason, and reason has yielded to caprice.

The tendency expresses itself alternately in what Elshtain calls the "politics of displacement" (what Charles Taylor has recently called the "politics of authenticity") and the "politics of difference." In the case of the former, it is not enough to win toleration of one's

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lifestyle; rather, it must be given political recognition as an authentic moral stance. Tendencies, behavior, and orientations previously classified as deviant now demand civic and political approbation. This kind of "identity absolutism lends itself to expressivist politics, the celebration of feeling or private authenticity as an alternative to public debate and political judgment."

The "politics of difference" could be described as multiculturalism run amok. It is at the confluence of two rigidly held, but perhaps irreconcilable, convictions: that humanity is divided into discrete, incommensurate moral, cultural, or ethnic identities, and that all of these identities are morally equivalent. As Elshtain explains, the process actually begins with a *suspicion* of equality, which, it is supposed, has the effect of imposing the same set of social or political standards and expectations across ethnic, sexual, and cultural lines. Such an imposition is a denial of the unique characteristic attributes of groups, and to this extent it is violent and dehumanizing. On the other hand, our deeply egalitarian sensibility will not allow us to regard one way of knowing, or any single form of cultural expression, as superior to another. Therefore "we now impose a common condition on ourselves in the name of diversity."

Obviously our condition is rooted in deep individual and group resentment, the wooden stake in the heart of any political regime. Resentment may manifest itself either through direct violence and coercion, or through retreat into discrete enclaves which demand to be seen as different from, but treated the same as, everyone else. Or, it demands the same social and political status. In either case, reasoned political discourse is once again the victim. A politics of resentment will always be a politics of irrational power, in which argument surrenders to assertion.

Elshtain does a nice job of parsing these and other social pathologies in our contemporary democratic society, and of pointing to the serious possibilities of future discord and strife. Hers is a sobering (though never hopeless) vision. However, a few shortcomings in her analysis leave the reader dissatisfied.

Elshtain's unrestrained commitment to pluralism is a blind spot in her analysis. For instance, she begins curiously by identifying John Courtney Murray, S.J., as "the great American Catholic pluralist." Now, to be sure, Fr. Murray was a pluralist, but of a very restrained sort; it was not his primary identification. "Religious pluralism is against the will of God," he once wrote. "But it is the human condition; it is written into the script of history. It will not somehow marvelously cease to trouble the City." Elshtain nicely summarizes the troubles of the modern City, but she fails to ask what role pluralism, inevitable as it is, might play in these troubles.

This is by no means to suggest that pluralism ought to be condemned or overcome; indeed, properly understood, pluralism can be a blessing to any society. But some of the social problems in our democratic culture may be rooted not in a corruption of pluralistic democracy but in the genius of the system itself. Elshtain's failure to note this is exemplified in her tendency toward the end of the book to lump all political positions into the seemingly exclusive categories of "democrat" and "antidemocrat."

The onus for any critic of our current democratic malaise is to show how it is a corruption of liberal democratic pluralism, rather than an inevitable result of it. Such an analysis must start by asking what it means to claim that we hold it "self-evidently true" that "all men are created equal."

The idea that there are such things as self-evident truths is itself highly problematic. But leaving aside the epistemological problem, the political implications of such an idea can be extremely dangerous. If I hold self-evident truths (or truths I think are self-evident), then by virtue of that I am a rational person. But if you do not share my understanding of these self-evident truths, this is evidence either of your irrationality or of your bad faith. In either case, you cannot be expected to be a democratic citizen, as you will not yield to obvious reason. And, of course, if your obduracy is threatening to me, I may be forced to impose some sanctions against you. This is especially a problem if you do not (or at least pretend to) hold it to be self-evidently true that all men are created equal.

On the other hand, if all men *are* created equal, then the obvious implication is that all men's opinions are equal (except the opinion that not all men are created equal). And if all men's opinions are equal, the possibility of one person making a rational judgment about the contrary opinions of another is eliminated. Any "disagreement" will be a function not of rational analysis and deliberation, but rather of willful assertion. And, as Elshtain understands, such willful assertion does not even rise to the level of authentic disagreement, since disagreement requires a common arena of rationality in which we can agree on what does and does not count as being reasonably valid. In such a state of affairs, conversation ceases, shouting begins, and violence is not far behind.

Now few people (if any) really believe that all men are created equal. The axiom is a useful tool, by which we all agree to treat one another as we wish to be treated. But the idea can still be used as a powerful weapon against dissenting opinions in a political society based upon consensus. If all opinions are equal, then no opinion may be overridden, since to do so would violate one of the truths we hold to be self-evident. It is easy to see how group rights and the politics of difference and displacement grow from such a state of affairs. If I declare myself a sovereign opinion-holder, and ally myself with other like-minded sovereign opinion-holders, then no one has a right to exclude me from the conversation. Moreover, by the canons of our mutual life, my group and I are entitled to the same respect, dignity, and public affirmation as any other person or group.

Jean Elshtain has a written a concise account of many of the pathologies that beset our democracy. But she fails to look deeply enough into the question of the roots of these pathologies. For instance, she notes that "each time we feel called upon to justify something politically, we tend to make our concerns far more individualist and asocial than they really are by reverting to the language of rights as the 'first language' of liberal democracy." But "rights talk" *is* the first language of liberal democracy, and we cannot deny its role in shaping our political convictions. In short, if, as Elshtain rightly asserts, "Democracy . . . is about the habits and dispositions and everyday doings of a people," then democracy, *per se*, cannot be exempt from scrutiny as we search for the causes of our political difficulties. We are becoming what we have told ourselves we are; we have removed the idea of public good from our political foundations, but we continue to expect people to respect the public good itself.

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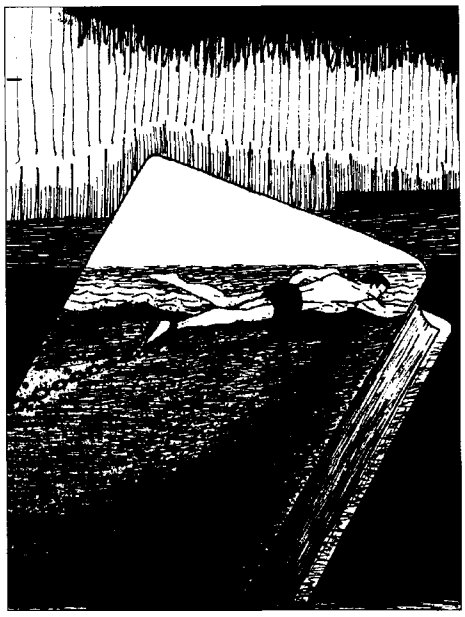
Truth Against the Grain

by Arnold Beichman

"Zeus gives no aid to liars."
—Homer



H. Ward Sterett

Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism
by Richard Gid Powers
New York: The Free Press;
554 pp., $30.00

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Richard Gid Powers' history is a powerful, even brilliant, piece of scholarship which documents one of the most bizarre political phenomena of the 20th century.

While Soviet communism, in its 70-year dictatorship, was probably guilty of every conceivable crime against humanity, it was yet able to escape the kind of principled censure which befell anticommunism. In fact, it is regarded as tasteless in academic circles even today to suggest that the United States won the Cold War. An "avant-garde" historian will say that the United States really lost the Cold War. An "objective" historian will say that nobody won the Cold War. An honest historian, like Professor Michael Howard, the distinguished Yale historian, in an essay in the *Times Literary Supplement*, wrote, "The Soviet Union lost." Even more, said Professor Howard, "the policy of the West has been ultimately vindicated, not only by our victory, but by the fact that the War remained *Cold*; and that we are alive to tell the tale."

President Roosevelt, a great war leader and a worse than inept peace leader, gets high marks from mainstream historians. However, President Harry Truman, who undertook to resist Soviet designs, is treated as a villain for supposedly beginning the Cold War. President Ronald Reagan, having won a great victory against totalitarianism, is being airbrushed out of history by unforgiving Establishment historians. Professor Powers, though he describes the Iran-Contra conspiracy as "one of the most clearly presidential misdeeds in history," has restored Mr. Reagan and his anticommunist policies to their rightful place in history.

To grasp fully what Professor Powers' book is about, the reader must remember the power which ideas such as communism and revolution had over people of all classes and professions, including noncommunists. Powers admits that "writing this book radically altered my view of American anticommunism. I began with the idea that anticommunism displayed America at its worst but I came to see in anticommunism America at its best." Professor Powers is acutely aware of what has been going on in American historiography, a field now bossed by feminists, deconstructors, multiculturalists, pseudopopulists, Afrocentrists, and Marxists, crypto and not so crypto. A monumental revisionist sweep of the contemporary past is at work: American communists are being classified as little worse than misguided idealists, thus worthy of our indulgent admiration; anticommunism remains the villain.

In a recent essay, "Communist History as Soap Opera," in the *New York Review of Books*, historian Theodore Draper argues that "communism, as all the world knows, with the exception of a cadre of American professors, disgraced the largely democratic tradition of socialism and strangled democracy wherever it came to power." He then asks: "What explains this perversion of socialism and democracy?" This is Mr. Draper's answer: "It is clearly an attempt to rehabilitate communism by making it part of the larger family of socialism and democracy. No one would think of doing this favor for fascism, but commu-

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Arnold Beichman is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and the author of Anti-American Myths: Their Causes and Consequences.

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nism with even more millions of victims and a much longer life span is the beneficiary of this sustained effort of historical rehabilitation in—of all places—American colleges and universities."

Since the beginning, serious criticism of the Bolshevik Revolution has been widely dismissed as uninformed, an abysmal betrayal of all that was good in mankind. From day one of that revolution, Lenin's political system, to quote Robert Conquest, "had as one of its main characteristics falsification on an enormous scale," an attribute that was to have as its result what Vaclav Havel later called "the culture of the lie." It was, for example, impermissible "red baiting" (synonymous with anticommunism) to suggest that Stalin's Moscow trials were frameups of innocent people. Or to say that the American League Against War and Fascism was a communist-sponsored front. Or to announce, as Americans for Democratic Action did in the late 1940's, that they would not allow communists, who opposed democracy, to become ADA members. The liberal media could accuse President Reagan of risking World War III when he called the Soviet Union an evil empire, but thought it high-minded statesmanship when former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance said: "Leonid Brezhnev is a man who shares our dreams and aspirations." Could Mr. Vance have said that about General Pinochet or Jonas Savimbi? The question answers itself.

Had Alger Hiss spied for Hitler instead of Stalin, could there be an Alger Hiss chair of social studies as there is today at Bard College? (The occupant of that chair, Professor Joel Kovel, by the way, has argued that anticommunism is an irrational illness.) Had Corliss Lamont worked for the global triumph of fascism, would there be a Corliss Lamont chair of civil liberties as there is today at the Columbia University Law School, honoring this indomitable veteran defender of Stalinism and financial angel for communist fronts? If endowed chairs exist at any American university for George Orwell, Arthur Koestler, Sidney Hook, Robert Conquest, James Burnham, or other renowned anticommunist intellectuals, I haven't heard of them.

It has been said with justifiable hyperbole that Hitler told the truth about what he was doing and nobody believed him, while Stalin lied about what he was doing and *everybody* believed him. With regard to the books and monographs about the Cold War written by mainstream historians, this gullibility is substantially the case. How could so many intellectuals have found Camelot in Hell, future utopias in existing gulags?

In her mordant essay on J. Robert Oppenheimer, Diana Trilling wrote that "a staunch anti-Communism was the great moral-political imperative of our epoch." So commanding a precept laid down by an American intellectual at the zenith of Soviet power would today be viewed with contempt by mainstream liberalism for being tastelessly "anticommunist." As Orwell once wrote: "The sin of nearly all left-wingers from 1933 onwards is that they have wanted to be anti-Fascist without being anti-totalitarian." Connected with today's lapidary liberal ideology is the slogan, first heard during the French Revolution, *pas d'ennemis à gauche*. The Soviet Union long profited from that slogan.

Even today, the young historian Michael Kazin cannot bring himself to speak truthfully about communism. In a review of Powers' book in the *Nation*, he trots out that old baloney about how the communists "battled Jim Crow laws and racist prosecutions." Of course they did; but selectively, only when the Party line permitted such battles. With the invasion of the U.S.S.R. in June 1941, there could have been a dozen Scottsboro Boys or Sacco-Vanzetti cases thereafter, and the communists couldn't have cared less. They were under orders from Moscow to discourage civil rights agitation; winning the war came first, and nothing should be done that might, as the cant phrase went, "rock the boat of national unity." Kazin talks rather patronizingly about "rational and irrational" fears about communism, but I doubt whether he would make such a distinction of rational and irrational fears where nazism is concerned. Kazin says that communists "did valuable political work, despite dishonest habits and thick ideological blinders." Tut-tut. Were communists doing "valuable political work" when they bitterly opposed FDR's reelection in 1940 and then supported him in 1944, in keeping, as always, with Stalin's orders? Kazin says that American communists "behaved quite differently than did Communists who possessed a secret police, an army and a Five-year Plan." Does Kazin really believe that American communists were free spirits, that they ignored Krem-

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lin ukases whenever it suited them? Doesn't he, a scholar, know that overnight the veteran communist leader Earl Browder in 1945 became an enemy of the Party at Stalin's orders and was purged? It was only an accident of geography that worse didn't happen to Browder and other purged American Communists.

Professor Powers takes care to distinguish among different categories of anticommunists. He is critical of what he calls "countersubversive anticommunism"—the anticommunism of congressional committees and conspiracy theoreticians like Joe McCarthy. In actual fact, not all of these committees were anywhere near as bad as they were depicted by the left; neither were they exemplars of McCarthyism. The "countersubversive anticommunist" operated on the principle that a communist conspiracy, directed and financed by Moscow, existed. And while it was quite the intellectual fashion in those days to sneer at *exposés* of "Moscow gold" financing the international communist movement, the opening of Soviet archives, thousands of its documents now reposing on microfilm at the Hoover Institution library, has confirmed that the Kremlin spent perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars on its Western affiliates: aboveground, underground, and camouflaged.

There was also the anticommunism of American labor—of men like George Meany and David Dubinsky. There were those intellectuals who had been close to, or actually became, Communist Party members, and then had defected for all kinds of reasons—the Moscow trials, the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Stalin's seizure of Eastern Europe, the attack on Hungary in 1956, Khrushchev's anti-Stalin speech. Something was always sure to happen that would test a party member's faith in Stalinism.

The dominant force in American anticommunism, says Professor Powers, was the foreign policy of liberal internationalism going back to Woodrow Wilson, who rejected the Bolshevik Revolution; to President Truman; and, finally, to President Reagan, who like Truman regarded appeasement or détente as defeatist compromises with an esurient Soviet Union. In fact, Mr. Reagan wore his anticommunism as a badge of honor. On the very day he left the White House, he said: "I am proud to say that I am still an anticommunist." And, above all, there was what is too often patronizingly called the good sense of the American people, who knew without much instruction from their betters that communism was bad; bad for themselves as wage-earners, for their children and their children's ambitions, for family values—for their country.

Anticommunism got a bad name in the 1960's owing to Vietnam, and in the 70's, according to William F. Buckley, thanks to President Nixon's détente policies. Powers quotes Buckley as saying that under Nixon's "tutelage, the entire anti-Communist constituency was disarmed." Anti-anticommunism became a rallying slogan for the liberal left. Powers singles out Norman Podhoretz, then editor of *Commentary*, as the man who "summoned the will, the strength and the imagination to commence the giant task of rebuilding the anticommunist coalition." Powers also credits the Committee on the Present Danger for having brought back the liberal internationalism ethos which had been so effective in organizing anticommunist policies. What is striking about the political scene in the 1970's is that while anticommunism in the United States weakened, it was, as Powers puts it, "reborn in the heart of the Soviet empire" as a result of the bravery of Andrei Sakharov, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and other dissidents.

There was a moment back in 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, and two years later when the Soviet Union disintegrated into a collection of 15 independent states, when anticommunists could empathize with Othello: "O! now, forever, / Farewell the tranquil mind; farewell content! / Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone." Who would have thought that a few years later they would be wondering whether it were *really* gone?

I am writing this essay in early March. By the time it is published, we may see a communist president of the Russian Federation. And if by a miracle Boris Yeltsin is reelected, he will probably be a prisoner of a resurgent Communist Party. So once again the anticommunists will have to reorganize, although this time they may have a different kind of communist adversary; even one, perhaps, without a driving ideology like Marxism-Leninism. ©

A Satirical Poet, Turned Down for an NEA Grant, Consoles Himself With an Image of True Grandeur

by Richard Moore

Bridling at every limit, he
detests his anonymity:
to celebrate his crimes,
writes letters to *The Times*.
O, Unabomber, hail your
success! It is no *failure*
to stay obscure, unknown.
Be glad that you alone
have held the helpless Feds off,
while blowing all those heads off.

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The Politics of Property

by Peter J. Stanlis

The Political Economy of Edmund Burke: The Role of Property in His Thought
by Francis Canavan
New York: Fordham University Press; 185 pp., $30.00

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A great many scholars have dealt in considerable detail with Edmund Burke's party politics and political philosophy, and a few have examined his thoughts on economics. But Francis Canavan's latest book is the first thorough and systematic study of the interrelationship of that great thinker's political and economic beliefs. As such it is particularly valuable, since it provides an excellent answer to the knotty question of whether Burke's politics and economics are complementary, or contradictory. The answer is not a simple affirmative or negative to either alternative.

As usual with his superb scholarship on Burke, Canavan treats his subject within the specific historical context of that thinker's entire public life. Moreover, he takes into account the relevant background from earlier periods. Thus he avoids the common errors that vitiate so much scholarship on Burke and the 18th century: the use of rational abstractions, facile categories, and ideological formulations. His study should terminate, once and for all, Marxist speculations on Burke's political and economic thought, such as those of C.B. Macpherson, who perceived the Whig statesman solely as a narrow partisan defender of the British aristocracy and its privileges.

Burke's views on property and wealth were based upon legal prescription, which he regarded as a basic principle of moral natural law, and he held that their continued possession and uses were determined far more by social custom than by statutory law. Thus his proprietary norms derived from the feudal system inherited from the Middle Ages, and not from the emergent capitalist system that Marxist critics of Burke have erroneously assumed he was defending. During the 18th century, property in Britain was divided between the Crown, the nobility, the greater and lesser gentry, the yeoman freeholders, and the commercial and professional middle classes in the urban centers. At various times in his public life, Burke defended the rights of each of these proprietary entities.

Since Burke believed that every right or privilege carried with it a commensurate social duty, he never defended property rights in the abstract, apart from the obligations that accompanied its role. He was quite aware that the origins of ownership were often based upon force, fraud, and injustice, but he did not favor confiscation or reparations for past abuses and evils. He knew that British hegemony over Ireland was made possible by historic confiscations that had deprived the native population of their property. He knew that the case was much the same in India, where a commercial company had become a state in disguise of a merchant by confiscating much wealth from the indigenous people. So, too, in revolutionary France, he was aware how the seizure of property from the Church and the nobility gave the Jacobins tyrannical power over the nation at large. Burke's attitude toward such expropriations was determined by his conviction that prescriptive law applied only to long-established ownership, not to recent or current confiscations. In his view, the evils of such abuses could be mitigated or eliminated by adherence to the constitutional rights of all subjects and corporate bodies to hold property. He believed that this was a better method to redress past injuries, and that there was no way wholly to eliminate the evils of the past. During the three decades that he served in Parliament, no one did more than he to redress the wrongs suffered by Ireland under British rule, or by the people of India under the East India Company.

One of Canavan's basic themes is that Burke perceived property as perhaps the most important single control over the legal and political power of the state. This was especially true in a secular society. Both private and corporate varieties of property prevented the growth of absolute centralized authority, thereby preserving freedom within the social order. Moreover, private property ownership strengthened all of the intermediate institutions of society that acted as so many shields against the encroachments of political tyranny. Burke was aware that, whenever such a tyranny wished to extend its arbitrary power, its first objective was to destroy the institutions to which men give their allegiance, such as the family and the Church, so that all that remained were isolated individuals, helpless to resist the power of the state. By reinforcing the corporate nature of man on the local or provincial level, property preserved both freedom and good order. When any of the nobility or gentry abused their economic power, transgressions were limited in time and place; at their best, moreover, such people provided the social and economic leadership in all the counties of Britain through a benevolent, paternalistic feudal sense of local community. That kind of leadership, Burke believed, was far better than that which could be supplied by either fawning royal minions or popular political demagogues.

Burke agreed with Adam Smith that private property was an enormous incentive to industrial vigor and to economic health; it was therefore one of the chief sources of a nation's prosperity and wealth. To secure this beneficent effect in the greatest degree the state must be curbed, so that custom is allowed to prevail. Canavan notes that in Burke's *Third Letter on a Regicide Peace*, he summarized the few legitimate obligations of government in the economic sphere: "Let government protect and encourage industry, secure property, repress violence, and discountenance fraud, it is all they have to do. In other respects, the less they meddle in these affairs the better."

Canavan has presented lucidly and succinctly the vital role of property in the economic and social life of Britain in the time of Burke. His book is a fine contribution to our understanding of both Burke and his era.

Peter J. Stanlis's most recent book is Edmund Burke: The Enlightenment and Revolution *(Transaction).*

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The Language of Literature

by Thomas Fleming

The Latin & Greek Poems of Samuel Johnson
Text, Translation, and Commentary by Barry Baldwin
London: Duckworth; 299 pp., £55.00

◆

"Poets who lasting marble seek
Should carve in Latin
or in Greek."

When I last quoted those lines of Edmund Waller, I was put down as a hopeless reactionary trying to restore Latin as the language of literature. In the case of the conservative journalist who missed the point, it would have been enough to learn a little English. The fact remains, however, that no one ignorant of Latin can entirely appreciate the masterpieces of English literature, and the Latin literary tradition includes such British writers as Buchanan, Milton, and Samuel Johnson. Even James Joyce tried his hand.

That Johnson is among the greatest poets to write in English, no one would maintain; that he is among the wisest, no sensible reader would deny. However, the very qualities that make Johnson's verse seem stiff—his formality, his gravity—are almost perfectly natural in Latin, and it might be argued that Johnson's best Latin verse is an important part of his literary achievement.

A superb new edition, edited by Barry Baldwin, now provides us with something approaching authoritative texts, as well as translations and commentary that will help the reader who might have forgotten some (or all) of the Latin he was supposed to be learning in school. Baldwin, who confesses that he comes from "what may be the last generation of Englishmen trained to write Latin and Greek verse at school," is the ideal scholar for such a task: a classical scholar with a lifelong interest in English and European literature.

Johnson's interest in postimperial Latin poetry was lifelong. (I say postimperial to avoid the wretched term "neo-Latin," which carries the suggestion that modern writers of Latin are hypocritical second-raters who converted to Latinity when they failed to succeed as vernacular writers.) His first announced literary project was an edition of *Politian*, the best known Latin poet of the Italian Renaissance. Johnson defended the university practice of writing verse in dead languages and said that Latin was the only language for letters of resignation, medical texts, and epitaphs. But, as Baldwin points out, he could be severe upon the shortcomings of even the best later Latin poets.

Johnson's surviving Latin poems come from his college days, his years as a hack journalist, and the period of his greatest fame. More than half of his Latin poems, many of them religious, come from the last 15 years. "In the last insomnia-plagued winter of his life, he turned out almost a hundred Latin translations of epigrams from the Greek Anthology," a great many of which are on moral themes. "Johnson's version are, then, extensions of his Christian devotionals."

Johnson's most celebrated Latin poems are the three he wrote on his Scottish adventure and the powerful "Gnothi Seauton" composed after completing the dictionary. Of this last it has been said that "Johnson never spoke so truly in English." After describing Joseph Justus Scaliger's disgust at completing a lexicon—a task, he said, which ought to be given to condemned criminals—Johnson acknowledges he is unworthy of the comparison, "whether because the coldness of sluggish blood or lying too long in sloth get in the way, or because nature has given me too small a mind." However, the real horror for this confessed sluggard is not work but idleness and "the tedium of a life that drags on." He spends the sleepless nights "mulling over grand designs" but is forced, in the end, to face the knowledge of himself: "an uncultivated heart and an intelligence that takes pride in fruitless ability."

This note of personal, almost Romantic meditation is sounded even more beautifully in an apparently late poem upon his youth in Litchfield, where he used to swim in the stream running from Stowe Mill. The contrast is between the privacy of Johnson's youth, when "branches made a secret refuge, and a bending tree kept the waters hidden in daytime shade," and the barren scene he confronts upon returning: "Now those old shadows have fallen victim to hard axes, and the bathing spots lie exposed to faraway eyes." But the Christian moralist refuses to draw the obvious lesson of entropy: "The unwearied stream, for all that, continues its regular course; where once it flowed hidden, it now flows in the open," and he concludes by advising that, whatever time may bring, you must "calmly continue to do whatever it is you have to do."

The Scottish poems are, for the most part, direct and even "natural" in their Latinity. Baldwin describes the religious conclusion to "Skia" as "jejune." Elsewhere he concedes that such things may be a matter of taste, and if a Homer nods, so can a Baldwin. The tightness of the poem obviously lies in the contrast between the storm-wracked shores of Skye and the power of God to quiet the raging tempests of the heart. Neither Christian humility nor acquiescence in the divine will be to everyone's taste, but they are at the center of Johnson's moral vision. As for the lines on the Stoics being clumsy, I leave it to the reader to judge:

Humana virtus non sibi sufficit,
Datur nec aequum cuique
animum sibi
Parare posse, ut Stoicorum
Secta crepat nimis alta fallax.

Johnson is Christianizing, as Baldwin notes, a famous passage in Horace, and it is much to the editor's credit that he has assiduously drawn attention to the English poet's dependence upon Latin originals. Occasionally, he does go too far in suggesting that a passage is somehow less brilliant, merely because it includes borrowings from Vergil and Horace—who in their turn borrowed from Homer, Apollonius, Callimachus, Alcaeus, and virtually every poet known to them. Like his Roman predecessors, Johnson is part of a tradition in which readers were supposed to appreciate echoes and allusions as a dimension of the text that played upon the reader's own experience of earlier writers.

Johnson, for all his brilliance, was always conscious of the tradition in which he wrote; his debt to that tradition, as well as his own contributions to it, are evident on every page of this splendid new edition.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of Chronicles.

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Desert Passages

by Gregory McNamee

The Mojave
by David Darlington
New York: Henry Holt;
337 pp., $25.00

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Of the four major North American deserts, the Mojave has been, at least until recently, the least explored. Good parts of the Sonoran Desert are more forbidding; most of the Great Basin Desert lies farther from highways and settlements; and much of the Chihuahuan Desert is less interesting than the fiercely hot Mojave of California and western Nevada. Still, accidents of geography and climate have left the relatively accessible Mojave the province of desert rats, isolated Indian nations, prospectors, and outlaws. All that is changing, writes David Darlington in his thorough history of the Mojave, an account populated by six-foot-tall, club-wielding Indians, by frustrated engineers trying to build ocean-going canals in the desert, by bureaucrats assuring "downwinders" that A-bomb blasts were nothing but minor inconveniences, by madmen seeking sanctuary in the American outback.

To the untrained eye, Darlington writes, "the desert is evil." He elaborates: "It is deadly and barren and lonely and foreboding and oppressive and godforsaken. Its silence and emptiness breed madness. Its plant forms are strangely twisted, as are its citizens, who live there because they can't get along anywhere else." This is hyperbole, of course, but it explains, or so Darlington suggests, why the federal government should have chosen deserts, those geologically and climactically volatile places, to store toxic wastes and explode nuclear warheads ("because there's nothing out there to damage").

On cursory inspection, there seems indeed to be little damage to the Mojave, the realm of "the Joshua tree, the desert tortoise, the high-speed jet fighter, and the car." (The desert's unofficial symbol, Darlington notes, is the abandoned vehicle.) But, he adds, there is surprisingly abundant animal and plant life even in the most barren parts of the Mojave. Although natural history is not foremost among Darlington's interests, he well explains the ecological workings of the Mojave, distinguishing it from neighboring biomes in a long account of the life history of *Gopherus agassizi*, the desert tortoise.

But human history interests Darlington more, especially the personal histories of the people who live now—quietly, for the most part—in the Mojave, selling gas and sodas to passersby, milling gravel and ore, prospecting, and especially ranching. The economy of cattle grazing is a matter of vital importance and of fierce debate in the contemporary West. In the Mojave, as in other deserts, the argument takes on added force because overgrazing is a demonstrable cause of environmental degradation from which recovery is a slow process. While recognizing this, Darlington is careful to let the people who earn their living by ranching have their point of view.

Indeed, *Mojave* is at its best when it allows the people of the desert to speak their minds, lending a perspective that we might otherwise not have. Many writers have made their coin writing of the Mojave-haunting Manson family, of which there are reported to be more members now than in the late 1960's, but the threat of the dune-buggy psychos takes on a different color when seen through the vantage of desert rat Tom Ganner, who remarks, "We've had Manson people pass through here, but they're really more of a pain in the ass than anything else."

Darlington also understands, as too many environmental writers do not, that many people live and work in the difficult places that lie far from policymakers' air-conditioned offices. He is thus ambivalent about the kinds of federal protection being considered for the Mojave. "As a rule," he writes, "I'm all for wilderness, but it seemed that the area's ungoverned mystique would surely evaporate if it became part of a national park." The people of the desert are, he writes, near uniformly opposed to falling under the protectorate of the National Park Service, in part because "the desert has historically occupied the most antiregulatory place in the American imagination," its residents men and women who usually want nothing more than to be left alone. The 104th Congress seems to be letting them have their way; in 1995, the House Interior Appropriations Committee awarded the Park Service the sum of one dollar to manage roughly nine million acres of desert.

Neither is he happy, however, with the current trend toward development. Las Vegas, the Mojave's most populated settlement, is an example of how not to make cities in the desert; so are the newly sprawling ranchettes of Antelope Valley just over the mountains from Los Angeles.

> While the names of new communities in Antelope Valley aspired to evoke the outskirts of Paris or London, their counterparts in the Nevada desert . . . suggested an ecosystem in imminent danger of drowning. Among Clark County's new housing projects were the Lakes, Green Valley, Silver Springs, Sunset Bay, Desert Shores, Bay Breeze, and Bermuda Springs. In an effort at consistency, developers matched these names with moisture-intensive landscaping, specifying sod lawns and shade trees for yards in a region with 20 percent relative humidity and four inches of annual rainfall.

The result, in Las Vegas, is a scandalous rate of per capita water use: 250 gallons a day, far higher than New York's. But development is everywhere in the Mojave, and development seems to be the desert's future. West of the hamlet of Gorman in the Tehachapi Mountains lies the densest stand of Joshua trees—one of the Mojave's characteristic plants—in the world; this is also precisely where developers are working busily to turn the Mojave Desert into a bedroom community of Los Angeles stretching from San Bernadino to the Colorado River, swallowing little towns like Baker and Soda Lake and Rhyolite into the urban maw.

Given a choice, Darlington rightly suggests, we are better to see cattle ranchers and offroad racers, perhaps the occasional psychopath, even federal managers, than endless strip malls and condominiums in the Mojave Desert. His book is a reasoned plea for according respect, environmental and cultural, to a place long regarded as a wasteland, but one that is now being torn apart.

Gregory McNamee's most recent book is The Sierra Club Desert Reader.

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Letter From England

by Christie Davies

I.D. Cards for Men

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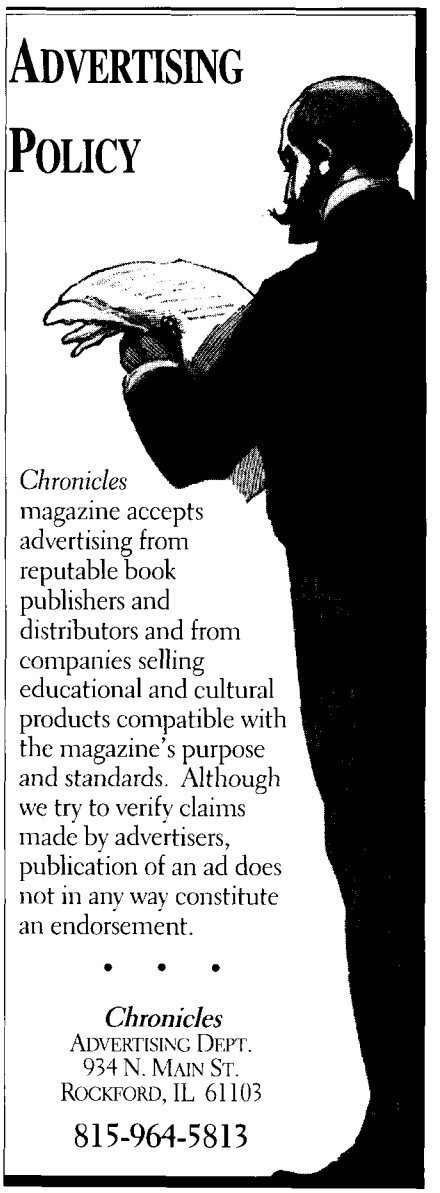
"I don't want to have to carry a handbag all the time" was the way an aggressive British opponent of the compulsory carrying of identity cards (as proposed by several members of the British government) yelled it to me recently. In fairness I should add that this defender of supposed civil liberties was svelte and female. She lacked the kind of bulky clothing equipped with capacious pockets in which middle-aged males such as myself still automatically carry the British National Registration Identity Card issued to them during World War II. Mine still carries the distinctive signature of my father, since I did not learn to write until I was three. Even at the age of one month I carried that card to prove I was not a German spy, and today I still wave my card with its British royal motto *Honi soit qui mal y pense* on the front at the French customs officials, to prove that I have nothing to do with France either. For men the carrying of identity cards is a belligerent proclamation of our central collective identities, whether as patriots or riotous supporters of a football team, and it carries our National Health Service code number so that in case of injury we are entitled to socialized medical treatment.

But why should the British government in peacetime in 1996 want to force *women* to carry identity cards? Women do not rob banks, mug elderly victims, start fights in bars, steal Porsches, vandalize phone boxes, or commit sexual assaults on sheep, and it was the rise in the incidence of enormities such as these that led the British Home Secretary, Michael Howard, to favor the introduction of identity cards. It is fundamentally unjust that the civil liberties of Britain's women should be confined and infringed in order to curb a male population whose criminal tendencies have exploded out of all control. There is no need for Britain's peaceful, honest, and law-abiding female population to possess, let alone be compelled to carry, identity cards. Why should they have to bother their pretty little heads about such things, or be forced to disturb the immaculate line of an expensive blouse with the ugly oblong outline of a piece of plastic, or to stop wearing tights? The common Danish female alternative of tattooing her *personummer* (a universal identity number that instantly identifies a Daness, right down to her DNA code) in some unmentionable place is equally offensive to British traditions and sensibilities. Worse still is the German *Arbeitsbuch* (work document), a bulky document listing a German bundesperson's entire employment history and ethnic ancestry unto the tenth generation, which can only be elegantly carried with any degree of concealment by a woman whose excessive degree of bust development is abnormal even by Teutonic standards. British women could never sustain such an imposition, and no British male would be so unchivalrous as to demand that they do.

The only just, chivalrous, and affirmative solution to Britain's identity card controversy is to compel men alone to carry identity cards, while leaving Britain's female citizens free of any such imposition. For men, the proclamation of identity on and by their persons is anyway a standard and expected part of their way of life. My British neighbor, Russell Moy-Williams, travels to work in London every day wearing an old Silurian tie, a Hemlock College scarf, and an Essex Pioneers regimental blazer. On one lapel a small fish proclaims his religious sympathies, and on the other a tiny red buttonhole reveals that he has accepted some obscure honor from the French government. The watch-chain that encircles his comfortable stomach carries an elk's tooth and the symbols of several other fraternal and esoteric orders. His teenage son is much the same but prefers T-shirts and plastic badges that declare his allegiances to the Toronto Blessings ice hockey team, a pop group called "Irish Weddings," and a commitment to S & M pride week expressed through the slogan "Black and Blue is Beautiful." His left eyebrow is penetrated by a medallion carrying a portrait of a famous Mongolian military leader, because he wants to be the only person really to the right of Genghis Khan.

Government-designed identity cards for British men are only an extension, then, of the kind of identity cards they carry anyway. The men of Britain will add them to their existing badges and wear them openly like conference nametags as a proud proclamation of a uniquely masculine identity not available to women. As for those who don't like it—well, they can always buy a handbag.

Christie Davies is chairman of the sociology department at the University of Reading, England.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POLITICS

Sex, Drugs, and a Republican Party

by Marc Morano

An all-night homosexual "circuit" party called Cherry Jubilee's "Main Event" took place in Washington, D.C., on April 13, 1996. The dance party featured public nudity, illicit sexual activity, and illegal drug use. Among the sponsors of the gay festivities were a GOP congressman and a host of corporations. A federal building, the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, played host to the dance and was the backdrop for the illegal activity. The sponsors included gay Republican Representative Steve Gunderson of Wisconsin, and such titans of corporate America as American Airlines, Snapple, Lite Beer, Starbucks Coffee, and Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream. The "Main Event" was followed by a "Capitol Hill Recovery Brunch" in the Rayburn House Office Building. Representative Gunderson secured the Rayburn building for the "recovery brunch," and the net proceeds of the jubilee weekend were to be distributed between Whitman-Walker Clinic and Food & Friends.

The Mellon Auditorium is a federally owned building complete with classical ornate columns across the street from the Museum of American History on Constitution Avenue. The "Main Event" was being described by the *City Paper* in Washington as "New York style gay 'circuit' party . . . usually drug infested." It was with this information that I proceeded on assignment for the Family Research Council into the gay world to investigate the activities that occurred in a federal building.

First, "Main Event" tickets were very hard to come by. The event sold out, which left a scramble for ticket scalpers outside the entrance. Several thousand men attended, most between the ages of 25 and 35 years old. Well over 90 percent were white, with only a few blacks and Asians present. Many of the men who attended were of obvious affluence. Limousines and even a Rolls Royce lined Constitution Avenue as the partygoers arrived.

The clothing was very trendy, with skin-tight black jeans and tank tops. The bartenders wore bright neon underwear, and nothing else. Many of the men arrived with leather and rubber pants, or wearing only neon rubber loin cloths. Most of the shirts came off as the men headed for the dance floor.

Body piercing was ubiquitous—through nipples, navels, and ears. Chains and dog collars were also prevalent. In addition, cross-dressing was a common sight, as a large number of transvestites and other "transgendered" men attended. Men with wigs and dresses in heavy makeup strolled through the auditorium. Several pairs of lesbians attended as well, parading around in very skimpy clothing.

There were no signs of aggressive behavior, as most attendees greeted each other with open-mouthed kisses. No fights or altercations occurred throughout the night. The terms "fags" and "girls" were frequently used by the men to refer to themselves.

Overall the men were very neat, with meticulous hair and clothing. There were few if any men who could be described as overweight. In fact, the overwhelming majority had bodies sculpted from weight lifting. Beer and bottled water were the beverages of choice, while apples, bananas, and oranges were in plentiful supply. The image of young, active, health-conscious men, drinking bottled water and consuming fruit is a study in contrast. The reckless lifestyle inherent in the gay experience results in a notably reduced lifespan. The life expectancy of a homosexual male is estimated to be no more than 41 years, with or without AIDS. The homosexual credo seems to be "Die young and leave a pretty corpse."

As the constant thump, thump, thump of the techno music heated the crowd, the dancing became increasingly lewd and suggestive. As the night wore on, the dancers began simulated sexual gyrations, and the dance floor became a torrent of intense groping and stroking. Some couples danced on tables, mimicking anal sex through their clothing while others pantomimed oral sex. At one point while dancing on a table, one of the lesbians lifted her bra and exposed her breasts. Meanwhile, several inflated condoms were batted about like volleyballs. At about 4:00 A.M., two men proceeded to engage in illicit sexual behavior in the main auditorium. This act occurred just off the dance floor in full view of the crowd, yet it seemed to faze no one.

The restroom stalls at the Mellon Auditorium were constantly being occupied by two men at a time. Gropes and groans could be heard emanating from the stalls with double occupancy. Stall doors would open and two men would nonchalantly exit. A battle between security and the partygoers erupted over the restroom lights. Security was then forced to place officers in the restrooms to ensure the lights remained on. The officers on duty did not look pleased with this assignment.

Every isolated spot became a dilemma for security. Security officers had to watch diligently the outside courtyard stairwell in the smoking area. The steps led to a dark alley on the side of the building where many of the men were congregating. The progression of couples heading into the darkness of the alley eventually forced security to intervene. Orange cones were erected to close the area off, as a security officer was assigned to stand watch. Public urination was common: the men relieved themselves outside and even in front of the building facing Constitution Avenue.

Despite signs posted everywhere stating, "Use or possession of illegal substances strictly forbidden," evidence of illegal drug use was present. Snorting could be heard throughout the evening in the bathroom stalls. At one point a straw fell onto the bathroom floor from inside a stall. There were also clandestine exchanges of money and substances in dark corners of the dance floor throughout the night.

This was not the first time that the Mellon Auditorium played host to a gay event. During the "1993 March on

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Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation," the Mellon Auditorium was host to the officially sanctioned "National S/M Leather Fetish Conference." The 1993 Gay March was designed to show America that gays are in the mainstream of society—just like everybody else. The S/M event featured members of the hardcore dominant and submissive homosexual community. Interviews I conducted at the time with participants revealed men who viewed pain as pleasure and total domination as an ideal. The participants paraded around the Mellon Auditorium in dog collars, chains, and had piercing in every conceivable body part. Virtually nude men who were "submissive" were being led around on leashes by their "dominant" partners or "masters."

This 1993 conference also featured a slide show presentation, showcasing an example of some of the "mainstream" aspects of the gay lifestyle. A series of graphic photos depicting various sexual acts were prominently displayed. One photo featured a man "fisting" another man. Participants at the event pondered the series of photos as though viewing priceless artwork.

The conference also featured sexually explicit magazines and paraphernalia to help fully experience the S/M lifestyle. One tract titled "The guide to safe S/M" cautioned that consuming fecal matter was a "high risk activity" for the transmission of the HIV virus, but maintained that urinating games were "low risk activities." Several publications on display advocated pedophilia.

In order to procure a federal building for any type of event, a maze of paperwork must be filled out and strict regulations must be met. Despite the public nudity, illicit sexual activity, illegal drug use, and pornography at both of these homosexual events, law enforcement never intervened. Contrast this with the controversy that inevitably follows when someone attempts to erect a nativity scene in or outside of a public building.

The 1996 Cherry Jubilee weekend proves that the homosexual agenda is advancing in Washington. The use of two federal buildings for the weekend party shows how successful the homosexual lobby has been in "mainstreaming" its agenda. Voters, consumers, and stockholders should hold the government and corporations accountable when they underwrite events like Cherry Jubilee. The voters need to ask which side of the "Culture War" the Republican Party is on and what real change the so-called "GOP Revolution" has wrought. The GOP leadership on Capitol Hill needs to explain how an event which featured illicit sexual activity, public nudity, and illegal drug use was allowed to occur in a federal building.

Marc Morano is a freelance journalist based in Washington, D.C.

Ron Paul and the Two GOP's

by Thomas Woods, Jr.

This November may not turn out to be as dull and depressing as it once appeared. Ralph Nader's charmingly quixotic bid for the White House, based on getting the United States out of NAFTA, GATT, and Bosnia, will doubtless add some substance to the presidential contest, but the most exciting race this November will occur outside the presidential arena. In a recent political upset, former Congressman Ron Paul soundly defeated the influential and well-connected incumbent Greg Laughlin in the Republican congressional primary in Texas's 14th district.

William S. White, an early biographer of Senator Robert Taft, devoted a chapter to what he called "the two GOP's," and the race between Paul and Laughlin placed this persistent division in stark relief. Paul, a medical doctor and a member of Congress from 1976 through 1984, is a man of the Old Right. A free trader, Paul opposes NAFTA and GATT as left-wing schemes that have more to do with entrenching supranational bureaucracy and undermining national sovereignty than with international trade. His position on foreign policy is one of strict nonintervention abroad. In domestic affairs, Paul is so opposed to wealth redistribution that he has consistently refused to vote for pork even for his own district. His record in Congress, in fact, earned him the highest National Taxpayers Union rating ever.

Laughlin's voting record also speaks for itself. Over the past few years, he has voted against the family tax credit and for the Clinton tax increases, the Brady bill, racial quotas, and Goals 2000. An organization called the Campaign for U.N. Reform even named him a "global statesman," an honor he presumably earned by voting to place American soldiers under foreign command, and through his faith in the internationalist trinity of NAFTA, GATT, and the Mexican bailout.

For traditionalists who cling to the belief that the GOP has their interests at heart, the Republican leadership's unanimous endorsement of Laughlin must have been particularly sobering. The guilty parties can scarcely claim ignorance of Laughlin's liberal past; shortly before the 1994 elections, Newt Gingrich observed that Laughlin, then a Democrat, "has a 78 percent voting record with Bill Clinton; that tells you where he stands."

In June 1995, Laughlin changed his party affiliation but insisted that "I'm not changing my personality. I'm not changing my philosophy, not the way I vote nor the way I represent this district." Yet in a contest pitting Laughlin against Paul, Gingrich and Texas Senator Phil Gramm endorsed Laughlin without hesitation. A disillusioned Paul called the endorsements "typical of our current political system to back down from principles."

To the chastened and cynical conservative, however, the GOP establishment's decision was predictable, to say the least. When presented with a choice between a "global statesman" on the one hand, and a true man of the right with a proven record of opposing the welfare-warfare state, Republican heavies will take the Clintonite in a heartbeat. As the primary season demonstrated, these men hate and fear nothing more than the genuine article.

With his impressive record in the House and his name recognition among conservatives in Congress, Paul could easily become the *de facto* leader of the congressional right with a victory in November. While Clinton and Dole engage in the most soporific presidential contest in recent memory—no mean feat, that—the real political story will take place in the Lone Star State, in Ron Paul's race against Democratic nominee Charles "Lefty" Morris. If Speaker Gingrich hates the rebellious Republican freshmen now, wait until they find a leader.

Thomas Woods, Jr., is a doctoral candidate in history at Columbia University.

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GOVERNMENT

Who Are the Freemen?

by Jeffrey A. Tucker

Trapped in their Montana farm, trying to fend off the feds, the worst crime the "Freemen" are accused of is attempting "to compete with the Federal Reserve," according to the *New York Times*. Imagine. These people thought that private parties could, on their own initiative, issue checks, print notes, and extend credit without monetary backing. They should have known that only a government-backed banking cartel can do that.

If this type of privatization continues unabated, street gangs will attempt to impersonate tax authorities by stealing property, looting families, and driving people to financial ruin. We can't have that. A government of this size and fragility must retain the exclusive right to engage in such actions as check kiting, counterfeiting, and large-scale theft. But I wonder why street gangs don't get similar treatment?

It is clear why Ralph Clark, the leader of the Freemen, had the notion that he could run a monetary system better than the government has. Mr. Clark is himself a victim of a federal money machine and the business cycle it generated some 15 years ago. It bankrupted him, and set in motion the surreal and tragic events that led to his present fame. He probably assumed his private financial system, however shaky, would work better than the one that has wrecked him.

This is Mr. Clark's second go-around with the media. In the early 1980's, before he was demonized as a thieving, right-wing wacko on the government's dole, he was trumpeted as a prime example of the beleaguered family farmer whom the government needs to immediately save. He was the subject of numerous moving profiles, including one in *Life* magazine and another by Geraldo on ABC's 20/20. It was Mr. Clark's sad story that inspired the "Farm Aid" concerts starring Willie Nelson and John Cougar Mellencamp. Nobody cared what his theology was back then.

In fact, neither portrayal gets it right. Better to think of him as a high-profile victim of the business cycle. During the fed-driven credit boom in the mid-1970's, when inflation was picking up speed but interest rates seemed under control, banks encouraged farmers and ranchers to expand their holdings using government-backed loans. In that inflationary atmosphere, debtors appeared to win out over savers. Racking up debt appeared to be a way to profit from monetary debauchery. The central bank was controlling the market signals, and the signal said borrow to the hilt.

In the first phase of such a fed-driven economic boom, an economy can make impressive gains in growth while interest rates and even price increases remain under control. When inflation does pick up, debtors do indeed do well, paying off their debts in cheaper dollars. But since the boom is artificial, and destined to turn into bust, it is important to get the timing right if you are going to play this game. At some point, interest rates will begin to incorporate an inflation premium, and then you are sunk.

So it was with Mr. Clark. In 1978, he borrowed heavily to add 7,000 acres to his land, and about one year later interest rates spiked up to 21 percent. With a normal profit, he might have gotten by, but in 1980 and 1981 he experienced a serious drought and then a hailstorm that destroyed what remained of his crops. A year later, the Farmers Home Administration called in his entire loan of $825,000. Land that had been in his family since 1913 was on the verge of being taken away by his supposed benefactors, the federal government and its connected financial interests.

Mr. Clark thus became a national symbol of the declining fortunes of family farms. In reality, he was a living example of why you should not trust the federal government's banking methods. The Reagan administration, under pressure from the media campaign and busy making political tradeoffs to support a military-driven Keynesian economic boom, vastly expanded agricultural subsidies and imposed a moratorium on farm foreclosures. The relief and the cash came just in time for Mr. Clark and his family. He signed a ten-year contract in 1984 for the government to pay him $48,000 per year to suspend production on steep slopes and eroding land.

With extra time on his hands, Mr. Clark began to read into what makes the government's monetary system tick, and became self-educated on all sorts of matters, from taxes to contract law, and tapped into the "patriot" movement of government skeptics and dissidents. When the subsidies stopped, Mr. Clark found himself still buried in debt and in more trouble than ever. That's when he resorted to privatizing some of the fancy financial schemes he learned from federal policy. This involved issuing "perfected liens" on assets of federal agents or agencies charged with breaking contracts, which are then converted into "Certified Bank Drafts" and spent or held.

I do not understand this device any better than I understand the fed's own Mexican bailout or Robert Rubin's financial shell game that kept the government running after Congress cut off its money. If these actions are legal, I do not know why Mr. Clark's should not be. In fact, *Media Bypass* magazine says that the Treasury Department has accepted checks written on liens over the years, and has even issued refunds for overpayment. When you are $5 trillion in debt, I suppose, you take what you can get.

If the Freemen are crazy, the people who run the government and its financial system are crazier still. The government began issuing paper money on top of liens and issuing endless checks as early as the New Deal, or possibly earlier. Lincoln financed his war against the South with the same technique. So have most governments in world history, but less with respectable cover than the Federal Reserve offers the United States government. The error the Freemen made was not to understand that Leviathan, especially when it is at war or deeply in debt, claims certain privileges.

As the government cracked down on this privatized Federal Reserve system, and surrounded his farm with federal agents, Mr. Clark hung a sign outside his house: "Freemen are NOT a part[of] the de facto corporate prostitute a/k/a the United States." But if hanging a sign is all it takes to be independent, those words would be on everyone's front door. The key to government—which is why people find it so objectionable when it becomes too big—is that it is above the law it enforces against everyone else. That's why it can claim that the "township" of Justus where Mr. Clark lives does not even exist, that his wheat farm has already been repossessed and sold at an

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auction, and that his paper money notes are fraudulent but that T-bills and the new $100 note are not.

Mr. Clark's is a tragic story. This family was tricked by the fed's manipulation of interest rates (which was heralded in a liberal media campaign), sucked into the farm welfare racket, and then had its farm confiscated by the very people who claimed to be helping it all along. We're supposed to be surprised that some people will buy into a cranky monetary theory and adopt exotic political ideologies to keep the FBI and other federal agencies from destroying their lives?

What is puzzling about this case—and puzzling too about the mounting cases of other groups targeted by the FBI—is why the federal government should be involved at all. We're talking about, at worst, $2 million of funny money, which the Freemen never tried to pawn off as government-approved paper currency or checks. Most of the people who got it didn't accept it; those who did knew what they were doing, and were often associated with local and state tax offices and other agencies.

If media reports are correct, the Freemen are hardly the only ones engaged in issuing these "liens" against agencies and their employees. Besides, credit card fraud alone runs into tens of billions per year, yet the feds are not involved in every case. There are several crackhouses in a neighboring town, often swarming with visitors, that are not surrounded by FBI officials. The Crips and the Bloods, who kill and maim people, are not broken up as conspiracies against the public. For that matter, the fed, Congress, and the White House can dump $40 billion on a bankrupt foreign government, and you are called a nutcase for even looking into it.

No, we all know that the FBI's actions in this case, and in many others, are designed to make the point that radical political dissent will not be tolerated. It's roughly the same point the government tried to make, much more violently, at Waco and Ruby Ridge. Today, we are supposed to celebrate the government for having the "patience" not to have stormed the farm and killed people, since the regs no longer allow agencies to issue shoot-on-sight orders. How sanguine we've all become to unconstitutional violations of liberty and rights.

In his state of the union address, Clinton explained that we should "never—ever—shut the federal government down again." If we did not have a government, he went on, Americans would be "left to fend for themselves," precisely what more and more people are pleading for the opportunity to do. Ever more government resources are devoted to making sure they cannot. We might say that the purpose of the present regime is to prevent any group from claiming to be freemen, ever again.

Jeffrey A. Tucker is research director for the Ludwig von Mises Institute in Auburn, Alabama.

MEDIA

McCarthyism in Manhattan

by Mark Racho

Last August I wrote an article in these pages, "Radio Days," in which I described WABC talk radio as the only conservative voice to be heard in New York City and the tri-state area. That voice is now gone; although WABC remains on the air, the station has lost its teeth. On April 17, the morning papers announced that "racist" talk-show host Bob Grant had been fired, and that his brilliant colleague Jay Diamond had "taken a temporary leave of absence."

This may not seem important to readers in the greater United States (and beyond), but wherever New York leads, other places seem to follow. New York and the surrounding states are so given over to absolutist liberalism that the loss of the last few vestigial organs of an alternative point of view must be deplored. Sadly, even the feebly conservative *New York Post* could not muster a defense of Mr. Grant when the media monolith moved in.

Why did Mr. Grant get fired? He made the mistake of being conservative, and passionately so. How did Mr. Grant get fired? The Disney Corporation recently acquired WABC. Having refused to part with its subsidiary Miramax Films' anti-Catholic movie *Priest* and the obscene *Kids* (a film that graphically portrays young children having sex), Disney suddenly discovered what it imagines to be ethics and then leaned on WABC, after a campaign of slander by such paragons of virtue as Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, and the "media watchdog" FAIR. Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting has long nursed a hatred for WABC and its hosts, putting out a carefully edited tape of Mr. Grant and Mr. Diamond's racier quotes.

In FAIR's worldview, any criticism of a black person by a white is "racist," and the tape of Mr. Grant appears to prove the point. According to the tape, blacks are "savages," "maggots," and "animals," and the local television news media delighted in playing cuts from it. Channel Five news actually denigrated Mr. Grant's listeners for daring to listen to his program. The New York papers spoke of "the words of hate that built Grant's tomb." What they omitted to mention was that Mr. Grant's "words of hate" were reserved for such heroes of the black community as the rapists who violated the Central Park jogger and the rioters who burned down sections of Los Angeles in 1992. Neither was Grant sparing with his epithets when it came to white savages, but the *New York Times* and its acolytes forgot to mention this fact. Jack Newfield, the aging leftist at the *New York Post*, reported that Mr. Grant avoided having black guests on his show; perhaps Newfield said this because Grant's many black guests were the "wrong kind of black," including Professor Walter Williams and Dr. Thomas Sowell (both of whom Grant often praised as "brilliant" and "great Americans").

Last month I received the tape FAIR had cobbled together from Grant's many years of broadcasting. It was an ill-spliced and amateurish effort, which any college radio intern could see through in seconds, the words hardly fitting together and the phrases selected out of context. But that did not stop the monolith and its friends in "alternative media" trusting the tape's veracity. I'm surprised some bright spark did not superimpose Mr. Grant's head on a photograph of Charles Manson.

The firing had, of course, been in the air for a long time, dating from the Republican victories in New York in 1994. Mr. Grant's effective support of Republican candidates rendered him obnoxious to the New York elite. How dare anyone oppose the saintly orator Mario Cuomo? How dare anyone criticize Mayor Dinkins for allowing a pogrom to take place in

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Crown Heights, which resulted in the savage murder of a young Rabbinical student? How dare anyone resent the Martin Luther King holiday? Bob Grant did, and his attitudes and ideas were met with a chorus of protest from the Pharisees.

Alan Dershowitz, the liar for hire of choice for murderers and rapists, appeared on the television news to describe Mr. Grant as an anti-Semite (meaning anyone who disagrees with Mr. Dershowitz). Ex-Mayor Dinkins said Mr. Grant was a racist (meaning anyone who forgets that the first black mayor of New York is not to be criticized). A spokesman for FAIR said that though his organization did not wish anyone to be fired, because FAIR believed in free speech, the dismissal of Mr. Grant was a good thing nonetheless because Mr. Grant is a racist.

The chorus was joined by the righteous talk-radio stations in New York, all of whom, far from deploring the loss of diversity in radio programming, rejoiced in it. The black-oriented station WLIB played songs of celebration and invited the tribune of the people, Al Sharpton, to comment. This is what happens, growled Sharpton, referring to Grant's opinions on the MLK holiday, to racists who "desecrate our heroes." Of course, WLIB sees nothing wrong with attacking Jefferson and Washington as "no-good crackers." Sharpton also claimed to be appalled by Mr. Grant's lack of reverence for the corrupt Commerce Secretary Ron Brown. Somehow, because Grant had not pretended that the loss of the Commerce Secretary was as great a tragedy for this country as the media had—somehow, in Al Sharpton's warped mind, this meant that Bob Grant had killed the Commerce Secretary. That one of Al Sharpton's disciples had firebombed Freddie's, a Jewish-owned clothing store in Harlem, and burned alive seven people, including a black security guard, seemed to have escaped the Reverend.

Other radio stations continued the hypocrisy. Bernard White of the "community" station WBAI went on the offensive, calling for the ouster of talk show host and Guardian Angel leader Curtis Sliwa, the last remaining conservative on WABC. Amusingly, Mr. White appeared perturbed that Bob Grant had occasionally referred to Jesse Jackson as Jesse "Jerkson." White's own continuous barrage of references to Curtis Sliwa as Curtis "Sleaze-wa" were, of course, unimpeachable: Mr. White is, after all, black. Asked to explain this attack on Mr. Sliwa's Polish surname, representatives of WBAI told me that African-Americans "cannot be racists in a racist society." Of course. What is perhaps most nauseating about WBAI is the multitude of talk show hosts and callers claiming to be "shocked" and "offended" by Grant and Diamond. One might imagine from this that WBAI is the last bastion of Victorian reticence and sobriety, with its "community" calling each other Sir and Madam and reading passages from Bishop Colenso, Cardinal Newman, and Matthew Arnold on the air. Rather the opposite. Amidst uncensored foul language, jolly talk about self-mutilation, pseudointellectual drivel about "issues" and puffs for *Mother Jones* magazine, it is easy to discern the rotting morality of aging hippie-Nazis. WBAI knows what is right, and God help those who disagree with the station.

The same can be said for the peddlers of the "Bob Grant tapes." FAIR has nothing to do with fairness or accuracy, for in its campaign against "Hate Radio," the so-called media watchdog appears to be colorblind in its left eye. When WLIB's Gary Byrd reads a poem (of sorts) threatening violence to the "men in black"—meaning Jews in Crown Heights—not a peep from FAIR. (Naturally, being orthodox and conservative, these were not the right kind of Jews.) When WBAI regularly refers to Mayor Giuliani as a fascist and "Ghoul-iani," this is not Italian-bashing. When the same station makes jokes about the Pope being a pederast ("Into the Pope-mobile, Robin . . . "), Catholics are supposed to understand the Swiftian wit. Only Bob Grant's and Jay Diamond's witticisms are beyond the pale, being perhaps *too* pale.

Lest *Chronicles* readers outside New York imagine that I am making a mountain out of a local molehill, I close with information that strikes nearer to home. Back issues of *Chronicles* are in the offices of FAIR on West 25th Street in Manhattan. I was told by one of FAIR's coordinators that dossiers exist on *Chronicles* editors and contributors. FAIR is a fanatical organization. After the more visible voices of conservative dissent are protested out of existence through McCarthyite accusations of

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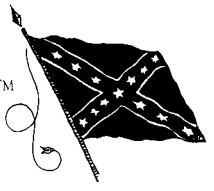

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"racist, sexist, *et contra spiritu Sodoma*," FAIR and its allies will come for the smaller fish, and they will never be satisfied until there is no longer anyone left to think a free thought. This means you.

Mark Racho writes from New York City.

MILITARY

False Colors

by Katherine Dalton

The Case of Michael New

Until last summer, Michael New was an unknown 22-year-old Army medic, three years into his eight-year enlistment contract. But in August, New learned that he and his battalion were being assigned to Macedonia, where they would serve under the operational control of the United Nations commander, and wear the baby blue U.N. beret and a U.N. patch on their uniforms. At that news this missionary's son from Conroe, Texas, balked. How could it be legal for him to wear a foreign uniform, he asked his captain, and serve under foreign command?

Lt. Col. Stephen R. Layfield, who is in charge of the battalion, reacted by promising New he would face a courtmartial if he disobeyed. Ordered to fall out in the beret and patch on October 10, New, alone among the 550 members of his battalion, did not. He wore his U.S. Army combat dress uniform without any additions. In response, Lt. Col. Layfield made good on his promise: the Army held a hearing on New's case in Wuerzburg, Germany, in late January. New was found to have refused a lawful order and was given a bad conduct discharge.

In some ways the sentence was lenient; he could have been jailed. Instead, while his battalion went to Macedonia, New remained in Germany, working with full pay as a file clerk and waiting for the review of his courtmartial.

As this article went to press, the convening authority who will review that courtmartial, Maj. Gen. Montgomery Meigs, had not yet done so. If Meigs upholds the courtmartial, New will be given a discharge that will blot his record. He will also lose the right ever again to wear his U.S. uniform.

His lead attorney, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense (under Bush) and a retired Marine colonel named Ron Ray, said that "we've never had a soldier charged with a crime, courtmartialed, much less convicted, for declining to wear the badges, insignia and uniform of another government—because up until Bill Clinton, all the way back to the founders, we operated under the principle that a man can't serve two masters."

* * *

Clothes make the man—at least that is what Michael New thinks. Acting on the advice of his attorneys, who say it is inappropriate for New to criticize the Armed Forces while he is still enlisted, New does not grant interviews. But in a written statement dated September 19, 1995, and presented to the court in Germany, New said:

> I interpret the wearing of a uniform, or the accouterments of a uniform, as a sign of allegiance and faithfulness to the authority or power so signified or which issues that uniform. I am an American who was recruited for and voluntarily joined the U.S. Army to serve as an American soldier. I am not a citizen of the United Nations. I am not a United Nations Fighting Person. I have never taken an oath to the United Nations, but I have taken the required oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America.

New read the Army Uniform regulations and "thought the uniform was unauthorized," Ron Ray said. While Army regulations spell out in detail what can and should be worn, nowhere is there a mention of the U.N. beret or patch. According to Ray, that makes the U.N. accouterments illegal. The Army's lawyers conceded in a January 9, 1996, Stipulation of Fact for the courtmartial that the U.N. beret and patch have not been approved, as required by their own regulations.

This would seem to bolster New's case. Army spokesman Lt. Col. Bill Harkey countered, however, that according to uniform regulations, "A commander in charge of units on a maneuver may prescribe the uniform to be worn within the maneuver area." Does that mean he could ask his soldiers to wear anything? "Basically, yes," Harkey replied. But, he added, the larger issue is that "when the senior leadership, I mean the President of the United States and our U.N. ambassador, signed up to take part in this mission, then part of that included wearing these accouterments on the uniform that will identify these folks as part of the U.N. operation." In other words, the verbal order made by New's captain and lieutenant colonel stems directly from the President's authority.

Ray's response is that the President's authority does not exist. While New's courtmartial centered around his refusal to obey an order, the defense team's legal arguments are much broader. First, Congress and not the President has the right to change Army uniform regulations, under the constitutional division of powers. Second, a President should not be able to force an American volunteer to serve under foreign command. "The President does not have the authority to involuntarily transform an American fighting man into a U.N. soldier," Ray said. And third, according to Ray, President Clinton does not have legal justification to send troops to the former Yugoslavia without congressional approval "as Commander-in-Chief or under the Foreign Assistance Act or under the U.N. Participation Act or the U.N. Charter or the U.N. Guidelines."

In the courtmartial pretrial hearing, Ray made all three of these assertions. He did not have a chance to discuss them before the hearing panel, however. The military judge refused to admit these arguments and declared the lieutenant colonel's order lawful, leaving the six-member panel to decide only the limited question of whether or not New had disobeyed the order—which of course he had.

* * *

New's battalion in Macedonia (the 1st battalion, 15th infantry) has been under the operational command of Brig. Gen. Juha Engstrom, a Finn. When New served in a United Nations operation in Kuwait, he was under American command. He did not object to serving in Macedonia, Ray said. He objected to having a foreign uniform and foreign

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commander there.

With the order to change an American beret and patch for United Nations insignia, the President has also ceded some control over American troops. Spokesmen for both the Army and the Department of Defense carefully drew a distinction between "administrative control," which President Clinton retains in Macedonia, and the "operational control" exercised by U.N. Commander Engstrom.

Army spokesman Harkey would not agree that the President has ceded any authority to the U.N. commander. Yet it seems evident that Gen. Engstrom has a fair amount of control over American troops. Defense spokesman Lt. Col. Mike Wood said that "operational control" means the U.N. commander cannot modify the basic mission, deploy American forces outside the mission area, separate those forces, divide their supplies, or administer discipline. The troops also retain the right to defend themselves, Wood said. But with operational control, Gen. Engstrom can tell them where to go and what to do. When asked if operational control means the Finnish commander can put his American troops in harm's way, Wood replied, "Sure."

Harkey added that "ultimate command" is retained by the President. He also said that under operational control, an American battalion commander reserves the right respectfully to decline a U.N. commander's order. Harkey could not recall an instance when an order had been declined.

Yet Gen. Engstrom himself seems to think his authority over American troops in Macedonia is a first. At a briefing session for American soldiers and their families held last winter, Engstrom was quoted as saying (in a November 17, 1995, issue of the Army paper the *Marneland Crusader*), "This is a very unique and historic opportunity. Before Macedonia, a non-American or non-NATO officer has never before had command of an American battalion abroad."

Harkey could not confirm whether or not the general is correct. He did say that American forces have been in U.N. operations since Korea, including missions in Somalia and the Sinai. But Harkey was unsure if in any of these missions a foreign commander had operational control, as in Macedonia.

Then there is the U.N. identity card. According to a United Nations Aide Memoire for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), troops arriving in Macedonia or Bosnia will "be issued an UN peace-keeping force identification card which will be the only identity document required within the area of operation." Army spokesman Harkey said he did not know if members of New's battalion in Macedonia were carrying such a card. "But I do know that they are not required to give up their green military ID card," he said.

Even if troops are carrying both ID cards, Ron Ray said, the fact that the U.N. card is the only one required says something about these troops. At the courtmartial Ray pointed inside the baby blue U.N. beret, to the label which reads, "Property of the United Nations." "Does that refer to the beret or the soldier who wears it?" he asked.

* * *

New's best chances for relief may come from Congress—and not just the House, where Roscoe Bartlett (Maryland), James Traficant (Ohio), Tom DeLay (Texas), Robert Dornan (California), and other members have tried to help him. New gained an important Senate champion in late March, when Kentucky Republican Mitch McConnell wrote a letter to the President that called the Macedonian deployment "illegal." He also promised as head of the Senate Appropriations foreign aid subcommittee that he would withhold "voluntary peacekeeping funds to support activities in the former Yugoslavia." (The United States pays a mandatory yearly assessment to the U.N. as well.)

The legal issue that concerns McConnell is whether this mission is properly defined as a United Nations Charter Chapter VI, or Chapter VII, operation. Since July 9, 1993, when President Clinton wrote to Congress spelling out the legal justification of this deployment, the administration has characterized it as a Chapter VI operation, which means troops are limited to 1,000 people, are there for observation rather than combat, and can be sent by the President without congressional approval. But according to McConnell (and New as well), the entire operation in the former Yugoslavia is really a Chapter VII deployment. This is a vital distinction, because under the United Nations Protection Act, Section 6 (the act that incorporates the U.N. Charter into American law), a Chapter VII deployment must have congressional approval. McConnell said in his letter that the U.N. itself has characterized the entire Yugoslavian mission—of which the Macedonian deployment is a part—as Chapter VII.

Of the 97 U.N. Security Council resolutions passed between 1991 and 1995 concerning the former Yugoslavia, none mention Chapter VI, McConnell wrote. But "there are 27 resolutions which specifically refer to both 'UNPROFOR' and the mandate for UNPROFOR, which includes UNPROFOR Macedonia, as 'Chapter VII' under the UN Charter," he said. He quoted language from these resolutions showing that the U.N. expected this deployment to involve combat, a Chapter VII criterion. (Chapter VI troops, remember, are there to observe.) He also cited the Army's own lawyers in New's case as stating that this battalion was "combat-equipped" and being sent into a "combat environment." "It appears that the Administration is using . . . Chapter VI to avoid the need for [congressional approval] on the deployment of U.S. troops in Macedonia," he concluded.

As we go to press, the President has not yet answered McConnell's letter. But whatever happens, New's case can no longer be characterized as a simple courtmartial of a young man who refused to follow orders. "What [New] has opened up here is an issue far larger than his concern about wearing the U.N. insignia," said Congressman Bartlett. "He's opened up the whole constitutional question of the responsibilities of Congress and the President."

* * *

While it seems unlikely that his courtmartial will be overturned by Gen. Meigs, New may get a second chance in federal court. In March, U.S. District Judge Paul L. Friedman in the District of Columbia refused to hear New's arguments for habeas corpus, but left the door open for New to return once he has exhausted possible remedies in military court. McConnell's press secretary, Robert Steurer, said the senator intended to hold a hearing on peacekeeping in late May, which may touch on New's case.

Then there is the court of public opinion. Both New's battalion and New himself will probably be back in the States this summer. Though New has told his lawyer that "he would rather go to jail than give a speech," he may be in great

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demand as a speaker, if his popularity as a talk radio subject is any indication.

It remains to be seen just what legal effect his case will have. Until McConnell's letter, New had relatively little support in the Senate. Sen. Larry Craig of Idaho has cosponsored a resolution to make wearing the U.N. uniform illegal, but even if this resolution is attached to a Defense Appropriations bill that becomes law, it cannot help New retroactively. And it does not address the question of foreign command of American troops.

Senator Robert Dole has spoken against U.N. command of American soldiers and Americans in U.N. uniforms, and consequently would seem to be a likely source of support. But as of April he had not yet interested himself in New's case specifically.

And so New's case works its way through Congress and two courts, while Americans continue to serve under foreign command—and not just at the brigadier general level, either. The *Washington Times* reported on March 5 that 18 U.S. soldiers were serving under a Russian colonel named Alexander Lentsov in Bjeljina, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Lentsov, wrote the *Times*, "helped lead the bloody attack on the Chechen capital, Grozny, more than a year ago." "Frankly, we don't have the bodies to defense ourselves, so we have to rely on the Russians for defense," said Maj. Tom Wilhelm to the *Times*. "We are putting our lives in their hands—literally."

While neither the Army nor the Department of Defense spokesmen could say how many American soldiers are currently wearing the U.N. uniform, a Joint Chiefs of Staff report prepared by Lt. Col. Pat Larkin showed that as of February, the total number of troops wearing the U.N.'s blue beret was 2,656. These troops were stationed in Haiti, Macedonia, the Western Sahara, the Middle East, and Georgia.

Another 86,000 troops in American uniform were supporting U.N. peace and humanitarian operations, or enforcing United Nations Security Council resolutions. Of that total, 29,000 troops were in Bosnia-Herzgovina and the rest in Korea and Iraq. As these numbers show, many more troops than New's battalion are now or could potentially be ordered to serve under foreign command.

"I am not trying to avoid a difficult or dangerous assignment or to get out of the Army," New wrote in his September 19, 1995, statement. "I served in Kuwait last year and have offered to serve anywhere in the world, in my American uniform, in the capacity as a U.S. Army medic under American command and U.S. Constitutional protections." But, he continued, "I simply cannot understand the legal basis of the Army order to change my uniform and, thus, shift or alter my status and allegiance against my oath of enlistment, my conscience and against my will."

Every volunteer in the U.S. Armed Services, by taking a service oath which includes a promise to obey orders, gives up certain rights he had as a civilian. Michael New's fate will show if the right to refuse to serve in a foreign army is now one of them.

Katherine Dalton is a freelance writer and editor in Louisville, Kentucky.

LITERATURE

Conrad Aiken

by Ralph de Toledano

I was to meet Cap Pearce at his office at 12:30, for discussion of a book contract and for one of our lunches at a small Italian restaurant in the East Thirties where the veal scallopini was well pounded and the wine muscular. But Cap called and said, "Come early. Conrad Aiken will be here to pick up copies of his new book, and I'd like to see you being tongue-tied in the presence of greatness." The world has forgotten Charles A. Pearce, although his letters to writers he edited turned up in this or that collection. He was the kind of editor who could work with a T.S. Eliot and a John O'Hara, as he did when he was with Harcourt, Brace; mollify and extract the best from young and overassertive writers on their first books; and get a best-selling author (as I was then) to acknowledge that Cap had the finest and most perceptive copy pencil in the business—and don't Maxwell Perkins me!

I always listened to Cap because he was the only real editor I have ever known, and because of the mutual affection and respect which bound us together. At the time, I knew that his publishing house, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, was being destroyed by a liberal whispering campaign which marked him "fascist" and beyond the pale because he had rejected on grounds of simple incompetence one of Howard Fast's "historical" novels. For this he should have received the plaudits of the literate in the book trade—for even Grub Street had given Fast, whose potboiled work gave off a mackerel aura, a bad name.

And Conrad Aiken? In prep school I had read and reread his poems, gone through all the critical writing by and about him on the school's library shelves, and had somehow begged or borrowed the money to buy his *Selected Poems*. I had typed and made carbon copies of two of Aiken's lyrics, *When Trout Swim Down Great Ormond Street* and *Music I Heard With You*, which I distributed to good friends and to my English teachers. And I had learned more about the poet's craft from studying Aiken's work than a year with George Saintsbury's great study of prosody. Few poets knew so well the exquisite use of language and the meters and pauses, the rhythms of verse. As I rushed to Cap's office, I felt slightly embarrassed that I possessed at the time only two of Aiken's novels—*Blue Voyage* and *Conversation*—which I had read and reread with absorption and envy.

In those years—as reporter, editor, and writer—I had met more than my share of the great and near-great in politics and letters—even to making charitable (and unrepaid) "loans" to an unwashed James Baldwin. I had read substantially in the works of living and dead poets, trying hard to seek the essence of their *ars poetica* while escaping entrapping mannerisms to confuse my own verse—tremendously difficult in the case of T.S. Eliot who penetrated like a dog beneath the skin. But Aiken had, for some reason, posed no such problem, and the ineffable seriousness and delight of reading him had not encumbered me—this though to everything he touched he gave significance and a special patina. His use of the denotative and connotative in language, his control of emotion while giving it freedom, and above all his sense of form and sense of the line, were not to be found anywhere in the verse of his time and mine.

Alain, in the essays he published in the *Nouvelle Revue Francaise*, had once writ-

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ten a defining sentence, "*Le style est le style*"—which can be read as "the style is the stylus" or vice versa. Aiken's stylus had cut through to the essence of French symbolism and the experiments of the pre-World War I literary breakthrough without affecting his style, which was purely Aiken during a period when so many American poets were plagiarizing each other's method. And his good sense had pierced the mass—some would say the mess—of Freudianism, separating from it those elements which were relevant to his life, his thinking, and our contemporaneity.

The book by Conrad Aiken which Cap Pearce had published was *Ushant*, an autobiography in the form of a novel, couched in a flowing stream of consciousness which no other writer had achieved. Over the months, as it moved from manuscript to bound book, Cap had spoken to me of the impact it would have on the literary world and on writing in general. "It is *sui generis*," he would say, "and yet in the great tradition of English letters. It is a book about life and tragedy. No, it is none of these things, but it is probably the most important book I have ever published, and the closest to me." Cap expected great things of *Ushant*, but they never happened. I thought then that at least Malcolm Cowley—who had once written that Aiken was "perhaps the greatest master that we now have"—would speak up for it, and to give it the discussion it merited. But Cowley was busy fighting the wars of the left—diving like a loon for the "meaningful," in William Hazlitt's phrase, and coming up with his pocket handkerchief—and *Ushant* was dumped by the critics, when they simply did not ignore it, into the cauldron of the who-shot-John of "proletarian" literary politics, then dominated by a crypto-Marxism which is still with us—and to Cap's sorrow, it neither made the best-seller lists nor opened doors of the art. There is nothing in Edmund Wilson's "diaries" for roughly that time except a note: "Conrad Aiken is back at Brewster [New York] and suffering from poison ivy."

For some strange reason, there are three men who, in my mind's eye, share physical characteristics—John Dos Passos, Pablo Casals, and Conrad Aiken. Dos Passos I got to know quite well when we served together on the board of directors of the American Conservative Union. I had spent several hours interviewing Casals and been the only newsman present when he suffered a heart attack while rehearsing the orchestra for the *Festival Casals* in San Juan. Aiken I only know from that one meeting in Cap Pearce's office in 1952. Perhaps for me the aura of greatness materializes only in one form. But that is how I remember Conrad Aiken as we sat in a second-floor office of a converted townhouse on a tree-lined street in New York's East Thirties. He was already there when I walked in, and Cap had said some kind things to him about me as a writer and poet—enough perhaps to convince Aiken that I was no questing newsman seeking to catch him in a misspelling.

I was not there to ask questions. Aiken spoke about *Ushant* with a friendly impersonality, as if it were a novel he had read, and not a deeply probing autobiography, in a third-person-singular mode, reaching into himself. He was matter-of-fact when I spoke of student days when I carried a volume of his *Selected Poems* under my arm on the Columbia campus—matter-of-fact but with no false modesty or condescension. I had a copy of *Ushant* in my hands—I desperately wanted it autographed but never had the gall to request it—and thrust it a little forward as I asked, almost biting my tongue immediately after, how far back into his childhood he went. I had in mind the opening of *Tristram Shandy*, a book whose spoor is visible in *Ushant*, and in Laurence Sterne's did-you-wind-the-clock opening. There was a slight stiffening, but no resentment that it had touched on a terrible memory—the finding of his mother and father, horrible dead in their bedroom. I rushed to some technical question, and Aiken smiled. "But you are a writer, you must know," he said.

I took *Ushant* home and spent much of that night and the next reading it. For those who will seek it out and turn to it with seriousness of purpose, it is a unique yet universal autobiography and a *roman à clef*—a memoir of literary worlds before my time and a penetrating inward view of the life of a man who lived for himself, for his art, and for those women and men who impinged on his existence. But as Cap put it in the jacket blurb he so lovingly wrote, *Ushant* is a *mix à nu* of man and of men moving in these misbegotten times. That is the only way it can be read today or by later generations not keyed in to memoirs of the literati who existed between the two World Wars. And it is a kind of epilogue and binder to the four novels he wrote, as well as to his poems—novels about Conrad Aiken and his wives and his anguish and life itself. They have been brought together in one volume, with an ultraliterary introduction by R.P. Blackmur. They should be read today so that the seeking may discover that a novel is more than a sexual limepit.

It has been many years since I read Conrad Aiken's critiques of literature and the arts—to be found now only in such storage places as the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress. But it is the poetry that counts, and the poetry which should be on the reading list of every college course in American literature—though I am certain it is not. I have tried to find out what undergraduates read today in their "survey" courses beyond Erica Jong and Stephen King—and I have come to the conclusion that the mimeographed lists are little more literate than "gangsta" rap. In my youth, we could follow the argument: Did Aiken want the colon in the title of *Punch: The Immortal Liar*—left out in the first printing—or did he invite the implied mayhem? *"It is morning, Senlin says"*—a morning enwrapped. The poem was read to us in class, and we read it ourselves. Perhaps what reached out to me, as an adolescent honing his poetic skills, was Aiken's striving to merge the spoken word with musical utterance—his "symphonies," as he put it, which predated Eliot's "quartets"—and his realization that English speech in its heightened forms flows in and out of the

LIBERAL ARTS

THE UNMELTABLE POT

"Just as the native population was able to maintain its distinctive culture despite centuries of invading armies, so in the United States, Iranians seem to cling to their ethnic heritage in the face of pressures to assimilate. . . . Among the Los Angeles students and businessmen studied by [Diane M.] Hoffman, 'American work culture, and perhaps the notion of work as applied to self, such as in the philosophy of self-help or self-development, were the only domains in which Iranians enthusiastically espoused American values.'"

—*from the* Gale Encyclopedia of Multicultural America, *1995.*

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iambic, even as that flow is encouraged by anapests and dactyls. He could move from the discipline of meter to the greater discipline of free form, avoiding always the dangers of the unrestrained adjective which lie in wait for careless or overenthusiastic writers, and never allowing emotion to overcome sensibility.

I took down from the bookshelf the *Collected Poems*, published in 1953, which I bought after a friend had walked off with the 1929 *Selected Poems*, and a single volume of that curious work, *The Coming Forth By Day of Osirus Jones* (1931), wondering how sunlight had faded its green cover, and as always was lost in it for several hours. Turning the pages, I remarked the strength of his self-criticism in throwing away much of the earliest work. The poems are arranged not according to publication date but when they were written, delineating his development as man and sufferer and poet. The language becomes less compressed and more conversational in the later work, yet never descends into the prosaic, which has yanked down so many contemporary poets. And always it targets the sadness and the experience of living, of attempting to reach to the core of what that living is, without indulging in the ironic cerebralism of an Eliot or an Auden. The ironies are there, for what is more ironic than man's determined clutching at what he is doomed to lose?

Do the new generations, as they break through the shell of their adolescence, read Conrad Aiken today? Do they in fact read anything at all—or do they wander in the vast cultural wasteland of our times? What evidence we have seems to say that the drive which led some to write and others to read what was written has been anesthetized by the getting and spending of a computerized, vulgarized, and televised world. The immortality achieved by poets and writers, by artists and composers, may well have come to an end in an ambiance which speaks loudest from the muzzle of a gun. But for those of us, the *detritus* of an earlier time, there is still a refuge in the transcendent spirit of poets like Conrad Aiken, in the music that filled the void of centuries. It may end with us, for a time, but it will return before trout swim down Great Ormond Street, for it is music that is more than music.

Ralph de Toledano's latest book is The Apocrypha of Limbo, *a collection of religious poems.*

EUROPE

A King for France?

by Thomas Molnar

Kings and dynasties seemed to be buried and forgotten when two recent events revived interest in them. On a frivolous but historically significant level, it was the series of scandals of the House of Windsor that brought Europe's ruling families brutally in the limelight. The general trend of desacralization is voracious for frequent feeding, and when prelates supply their share of scandals, inevitably the princes join. Who can indulge in more sex and divorce, play hide-and-seek with cameramen any better, and make more shocking declarations to the press?

The other recent event was more serious and significant. When the Berlin Wall fell, near and remote candidates to the vacant thrones of Europe knocked with an unseemly haste at their respective country's door, arguing that the orphaned nations would eagerly turn to them; after all, they had not been involved in the events of the past 40 years or more. The other royal argument was that ex-kings and new pretenders stood above the turmoil, were thus impartial, forgave all the recent actors—that they had learned much about democracy while in Western exile. They would, of course, point to the one restored royal democracy, Juan Carlos in Spain, forgetting that not popular will but a dictator had put the youngster back in power; they would also point to the permanent kingly and queenly stalwarts in Belgium, Holland, and Scandinavia. As if the position of a king of Greece, let's say, were comparable to the one in Denmark! The quest for kingship shows, however, that kings, sacralized rulers, are never totally anachronistic, as thousands of years of a universal tradition testify. Let me quote just one, by Hugues de Saint-Victor (1141): "Spiritual power has the vocation to institute the worldly power. . . . Royal power is established by the priests on command by God." Here, among others, is the root of the "Throne's and Altar's alliance."

The search of ex-kings for their missing throne came to my closer attention as West European acquaintances asked me insistently whether Hungarians wanted Otto von Habsburg back, and what about Mihail's chances in Rumania, Boris's in Bulgaria, Leka's in Albania, and Peter's in Yugoslavia? I answered "No chance"; except for a nostalgic mini-minority, these nations are not interested in a restoration; neither are their tutelary great powers, nor the Mafias, the democrats, the liberals, the reactionaries, the fishers in murky waters. Each has its reasons. Restoration seems passé. The only country where it is at least imaginable and conceivable is France. Not the Romanovs in Russia, not the Braganca in Portugal or Brazil, but the Orléans in France. Who are they?

Believe it or not, at least 20 percent of the French population would *accept* a restoration, and another 10 percent would jump on the royalist bandwagon if faced with a *fait accompli*. One-third of the electorate is nothing to sneer at in a democracy—and France has never been a true, heart-and-blood democracy. Rebellious, often revolutionary, yes; democratic, no. And consider the additional fact that at least 50 percent of the electorate who even drag themselves to the ballot box do so only by routine, in reality bored by the cult of human rights and the democratic process. In short, a *prince* of the royal house as *president* of the republic would find a friendly terrain; after all, it has happened before, in 1851, and the result was not too bad: Napoleon III. Louis Bonaparte started as a prince-president and became an emperor. This was still possible with memories of his uncle. But such a coup under the present circumstances is not likely.

On the other hand, the French political class today is incredibly corrupt and, worse, bored. De Gaulle, a General-President (hyphenated heads of state are not a drawback in France), was forgiven for his monumental sins and errors because he cut a monarchical figure, strong in his loyalties and hatreds, and master at pomp and circumstance that all nations, perhaps we in the United States too, love and crave. He was also smart enough to lead people by the nose, such as the pretender to the throne of Saint Louis and Louis XIV—the Count of Paris. De Gaulle made him believe for years that he, the count, would be his natural successor, but while Franco, across the Pyrenees, stood by his word, De Gaulle

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merely used the count: for the latter's high hopes both secured the loyalty of the monarchists for the General-President and suggested that a great man like De Gaulle could not have a mere ballot-box successor.

Anyway, the Pretender was left high and dry. He did, however, overcome the doubt that only a Bourbon and not an Orléans could become king. The Count of Paris was a descendant of the junior Orléans branch, and his great-great-grandfather was Prince Philippe, nicknamed in the French Revolution "Philipe Egalité" since he had helped to undermine the throne in 1789 and voted for his cousin's—Louis XVI's—death! Hence the revulsion of the monarchist camp. However, since De Gaulle's death in 1970, the Count of Paris has gained legitimacy over his possible rivals—left or right—which would have none of him: they have chained themselves to the flesh-pots of power.

Thus, the Count of Paris has been trying and trying. He has portrayed himself as a conservative to France's New Class (industry, media, liberals, socialists). This failed, so he tried a populist tone (labor, the socialist left wing). One of the intellectual magazines calling itself royalist in its title has even flirted with the new communists and the Arab immigrants, while the count's right-wing supporters are pulling him in the opposite direction. After all, the last Bourbon pretender, more than a hundred years ago, announced his program "to reawaken 1789" as an alliance of king and people! This, too, has a long tradition in France.

Last year I received a book, nicely inscribed by the Pretender's eldest son, Prince Henri, Count of Clermont. It is smartly titled *Adresse au futur chef de l'Etat*, which can be understood in two ways: advice to the next resident of the Republic—whoever he may be—or a program for the author himself in case he becomes prince-president. To the reader's pleasant surprise, the work does not only stand out among the "princely literature" of today, it stands out, period. The author has no wish to hide his origins and status; he fully claims his royal lineage, "the forty kings who made France" since Hugh Capet (ninth century), as the monarchist saying goes. This natural and modest stance, not at all overdone (he mentions that as a soldier in the Foreign Legion, a malicious corporal assigned him to latrine duties, and that he was once invited by the local Madam to have lunch with the "ladies"—something unimaginable in an Anglo-Saxon country), is both charming and fitting, and lends him credibility. A random list of what the Count of Clermont is for and against: for the power of customs, against the legalism of the bureaucratic state-apparatus; for the prudent assimilation of North African and other immigrants who show loyalty to France; against the treaties of Maastricht and Schengen which rob France of her sovereignty; for the integrity of the family through financial support for each child, therefore against abortion; for a more active foreign trade against the invasion of American products, whether films, videos, or others earmarked in the GATT treaties; etc. The list, with each item separately and competently discussed, amounts to a kind of New Deal, an effort at modernization which does not jeopardize the world's richest cultural heritage.

The author does not fall into any of the traps allowing the critics to say, "Well, it is easy for him, for what he writes is gratuitous." What he writes, indeed, should be measured and evaluated against the background noise of boring vacuities of the political class, arrogant, cowardly, and demagogic. The author has, after all, at least the same rights as a Chirac, Barre, Balladur, or Jospin to judge the French situation, that of a decadent ex-empire kept, through its own fault, on a "European" and trans-Atlantic leash. Let us bear in mind that what the prince proposes and promises is fealty to a French tradition: the regularly occurring revolt of the nation, whether led by Joan of Arc against the English occupation, by the young Louis XIV against the power of the feudal remnant, by Napoleon who "cleansed the revolution," or by De Gaulle against the country's second-rate status. These rebellions were accomplished without the curse of an ideology; they were pragmatic, although with a strong faith behind them, summed up by Charles Péguy as: "God created Frenchmen so He may have people to converse with."

All this may not secure the throne, not even the presidency. Yet what Prince Henri writes in this book is henceforth on record. France's present situation is such that mere survival as a consumer society would wipe her out as a nation. Squeezed between a stronger Germany, whose imperial-romantic penchant can never be discounted, and an imperialist United States, with its economic-missionary zeal, France's diplomacy is listless, amateurish, and submissive. The insane notion of European unity makes her governing personnel hesitant, her citizens unsure whether they wake up tomorrow to a Disneyland status. Bernanos wrote that France must be saintly and heroic, or it is not France. The prince does not allow himself to say this, but he says far more than any member of the political-intellectual class would dare even to think. And it is pure common sense.

Perhaps this stems from the tradition of the "people's king," a tradition always cultivated by the throne. Historiography since the revolution has tried to falsify that concept and show the king as a despot. It is a false concept, as shown by the recent work of Gaubert, Furet, Chaunu, among others. In days before the rise of an irresponsible bureaucracy, ordinary people felt closer to their king. The big question in France is whether a monarchist restoration would reinstill this feeling or merely create a redecorated parliamentary (or even presidential) regime, neutralizing the monarch, perhaps turning him into a politician with debts to the "restorers." Constitutionally and financially tied, not he but the International Monetary Fund and the Deutschmark would rule, as they do today all over the globe. This is what "globalism" means today.

Thomas Molnar's Philosophical Grounds *(1991) was recently rereleased by Transaction Publishers as* Archetypes of Thought.

LIBERAL ARTS

SINGING FOR PEACE

"When a critical mass of women in UN peace-keeping missions exists, local women in the host country are mobilized through a positive demonstration effect. . . . They sometimes use unorthodox means such as singing to defuse potentially violent situations."

—from "The Role of Women in United Nations Peace-keeping," Women 2000, *December 1995.*

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SCIENCE

Truth and Consequences

by Steven Goldberg

Dead white males did not invent the rules of science; they discovered them. These rules enable science, and science alone, to make successful prediction.

And prediction is only evidence acknowledged by science to demonstrate that one is on the trail of the truth. One may, of course, invoke anything one wishes in attempting to come up with a successful scientific claim. If a dose of intuitional astrological foot fetishism helps, fine. But this claim gains no scientific *validity* until it can successfully make a prediction that does not require allegiance to intuitional astrological foot fetishism.

Prediction is the determinant of scientific truth—and, many believe, the determinant of *anything* (other than logical and mathematical truth) that can be termed "truth." Prediction plays this role because science holds that "truth" can meaningfully be defined only as the concordance of a claim (a description, hypothesis, theory, or explanation) with nature ("reality"). And only a claim's ability to predict can give us reason to believe that we are nearing truth—as opposed to merely experiencing a powerful, but quite possibly deceptive, *feeling* that we are nearing truth.

To be sure, there are those who apply the word "truth" to beliefs and moral values, concepts that are not, even in principle, capable of giving us reason to believe that they are more than an arbitrary preference, a subjective feeling. Such people tend to gravitate to empirical areas relevant to social issues: male-female differences, homosexuality, the death penalty, abortion, and the like. This, in addition to the fact that the less-controversial questions addressed by the physical scientists tend to attract smarter people, accounts for the fact that so many who write on empirical social questions are willing to subordinate logic to ideology.

Science can, of course, address such empirical issues as "which social factors increase the likelihood that religious beliefs will be entwined with moral beliefs." It can consider such empirical claims about morality as, say, "societies in a stage of strong economic birth tend to see premarital sex as wrong" and, if such claims are true, it can explain the realities.

But science cannot make coherent the question of whether there is a God, and it cannot tell us whether it is better to favor sexual freedom or economic growth. In other words, science cannot conceive of any system of thought that can validate issues for which there is no possibility of text even in principle. Science does not know good from bad or right from wrong. The closest it gets to an objective moral claim is a belief that survival is good. And that is not very close in a universe that we have no reason to believe is concerned with our survival.

Science does not care whether a claim is made by a man or a woman; by a black, yellow, or white; or by a Nobel laureate, a plumber, or a clerk in a patent office. While the nonscientist part of any person worthy of being called "human" cares about the uses to which new knowledge will be put, such issues are irrelevant to the part that is a scientist. The only goal of science is the diminution of the distance between present knowledge and truth. The only subjective assumption of science is that nature will give you a lift only if you are going her way. To the scientist, the willingness to validate an empirical claim on the basis of bias, prejudice, or emotional and political need—or to reject a claim on the basis of the motivations of the claimant or the putative consequences of accepting the claim—represent an infantile narcissism; to the intelligent believer, these represent a lack of faith and a blasphemous conviction that one knows better than God.

In truth, the scientist cares more about hunting down the prey than tasting it. The fun is in the search. Indeed, the third best thing about a truth is that it raises questions about undiscovered truths that the scientist would not have thought of. (The second best thing about truth is that it is inherently subversive, and the best thing is that it is true. Many will, of course, rank these virtues differently. It does not matter; it is just a question of taste.)

The pull of undiscovered truths is so great that there is the ever-present threat that the cracks in a "truth" on which one already stands will be overlooked. That is why science systematically attempts to eliminate all illegitimate reasons for holding to a truth. This process comes with only a partial warranty, so there is always the possibility of error. Some of these errors have, when exposed, launched the highest flights of intelligence and imagination. But even at its worst, science protects itself far better than does any other sort of investigation.

There will always be many who believe that science defines its own victory and that there are alternative routes to truth. But the claimed alternative routes to truth give us no prediction, no reason to believe that they exhibit anything more than a feeling and an insupportable claim of truth, a claim whose validity is as dubious as its ability to soothe is obvious.

Scientists are only people, of course, and every scientist will occasionally hope that some specific claim turns out to be true and others false. But science is structured to defend itself against such desires, and the ability to ignore them is, in science, what separates the grown-ups from the children.

Steven Goldberg is chairman of the sociology department at City College, City University of New York. His latest books are When Wish Replaces Thought *(Prometheus) and* Why Men Rule *(Open Court).*

To An Artist Who Has Made It

by Richard Moore

Your paintings got a grant.
Newspapers ballyhoo them.
Thus warned, I shan't
trouble to view them.

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MORALITY

Out of Order

by Terence Gallagher

When Aeneas lands, after seven years of wandering, shipwrecked on the shores of Africa, his great concern is to discover the nature of the country into which fate has cast him, and the temper of the people who live there. His fears are put to rest when he stands in the rising city of Carthage and sees on the walls of a temple the depiction of his own story, of the siege and downfall of Troy. He knows then that he has arrived at a place where "there are proper rewards for the praiseworthy, where there are tears for the world's affairs and mortal deeds touch the heart." In other words, he knows he will be treated justly because he is in a country where people recognize things for what they are and react accordingly to them. If something is honorable, they honor it; if something is tragic, they weep for it. One might call this the capacity for proportionate reaction to moral reality. "Cast away fear," says Aeneas to his companions, "your fame here will bring you safety." Aeneas is confident that when the people of Carthage recognize who the Trojans are, they will treat their visitors with honor.

Conversely, a wanderer wrecked on the shores of a country where no proportion is shown in moral reactions would be well-advised to retain a good deal of healthy fear. An Aeneas looking about him in contemporary America might have felt less sanguine about his prospects of honor and safety, for public life has become a forum for ever more inappropriate responses to ever more bizarre forms of behavior. The wince of recognition has become familiar, so familiar that example seems superfluous: the lawyer for the Menendez boys has jurors over for milk and cookies after the declaration of a hung jury; Amy Fisher's mother gains a sympathetic ear for her laments that her daughter will be unable to enjoy Thanksgiving at home; Susan Smith kills her children and becomes the "victim" of the pressures oppressing women today.

There was the *New York Times*' picture of O.J. Simpson's lawyer Robert Shapiro with an arm fondly draped around Dennis Fung's shoulder at the conclusion of Mr. Fung's testimony: the photo's caption informed us that Mr. Simpson himself cordially shook hands with Mr. Fung. Now, put this in perspective: Mr. Simpson's lawyers had just spent a great deal of time attempting to demonstrate that Fung had participated in a scheme to frame O.J. for murder, so what possible purpose could the concluding love-in, conducted in full view of the jury, be intended to achieve? Well, because Mr. Shapiro had been guilty of making a joke about Mr. Fung that appeared to be in poor taste, it then became important for Mr. Shapiro to convince both the jurors and the public at large that he was not a bigot; in the face of this need, the question of who may or may not have hacked two people to death, and of who may or may not be framing an innocent man for a capital crime, faded into comparative insignificance.

Such behavior reflects not only the loss of a capacity for morally proportionate reactions but also the primacy of *political* behavior. When society loses the belief that there is intrinsic meaning residing in things themselves and hence a proper, and an improper, way to view reality, the resulting confusion is a perfect field for the assertion of political power. People simply do not know how to act, even when they have been personally injured, and it is left to those with the loudest and most persistent voices to tell them. This accounts for the extreme, almost hysterical touchiness, exhibited in our society when confronted by the mildest example of "racism," or "sexism," or "homophobism." The reactions are not proportionate to whatever offense is committed, but rather proportionate to the public profile of the offended group. Thus, the Menendez boys claimed the mantle of child-abuse victims; Amy Fisher and Susan Smith are female and therefore, according to the tenets of feminism, more sinned against than sinning.

In the absence of a sense of ordered reality, the power of politics (which in our democracy means the power of organized special-interest groups) is unlimited, even to the extent of blurring the distinction between man and the lower animals. When a California woman was killed by a mountain lion last year, and the lion subsequently destroyed, the woman's children and the lion's cubs were both left motherless; donations for the support of the cubs far exceeded donations for the support of the children. In an earlier incident, when a five-year-old girl was severely mauled by another mountain lion, to the point of suffering brain damage, there was widespread resistance to killing the lion; the caller to the California Fish and Game Department who said that humans are always replaceable, whereas mountain lions are not, gave expression to what is rapidly becoming common educated opinion. These are the reactions of people whose consciences have been completely formed by politics; they simply do not know that people are intrinsically worth more than animals. Animal rights advocates, environmentalists, conservationists all speak for animals; there is no group that speaks for people-who-have-been-mauled-by-animals. Lacking a public profile, such people are simply invisible. Among the truly civilized it is considered grossly offensive to imply that there is any primacy to be accorded to humans—such bias is labeled "speciesism" and filed with all the other abhorred biases.

When people lose all belief in a morally ordered reality, there can be no *lacrmae rerum* because there are no longer any real things, any *res* of independent meaning and value, to inspire tears. To many, the abandonment of the conviction that some intrinsic meaning resides in the world's affairs and *commands* human feelings rather than being subject to them, no doubt seems like a liberating thing. On the contrary, when the human understanding of reality is cut loose from its moorings to truth, people become completely subject to the shifting demands of politics. The personal judgment of human beings, grounded in each person's understanding (however dim) of a real moral order, gives way to pressures brought to bear by whoever happen to be the current rulers of society, who assign value by sheer force of will. As a result, human moral reactions and beliefs must submit to a master that is tyrannical, completely capricious, and inevitably unreasonable.

Terence Gallagher writes from Bayside, New York.

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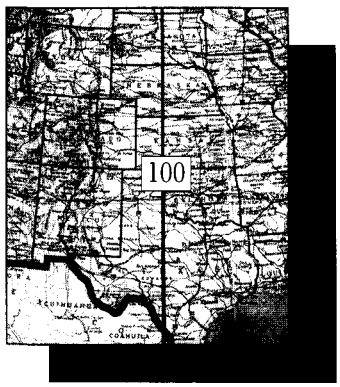
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Alternative California

It felt as strange flying west—not south, not east—from Salt Lake City as if the earth had reversed its rotation and were spinning in the opposite direction. Basin and range, range and basin: the long barrier mountains were heavy with snow, but now in early March the desert separating them lay bare, dramatizing the topographical disjunctions. The skies were clear and the view unbroken until we crossed into Nevada over Wendover (a gambling town, where recently my friend Brad Willford of Kemmerer was misidentified as Joe Waldholtz by a female drunk who demanded that he be arrested and sent to jail), and snow-clouds piled above the mountains. The mountains, where they were visible between the vapor masses, closed up to form deep trenches and high basins, a moiling confusion of dark rock and bright snow. The clouds vanished abruptly, and we were flying above an expanse of forested wilderness broken by the high peaks of the Sierra Nevadas, open snow fields, and the southern end of Lake Tahoe passing directly beneath the body of the plane. The high mountains ended, and roads and houses appeared in the foothills. The plane banked steeply to the south, the Sacramento Valley—wide, green, and humid—rose to meet us, and I saw the geometrically neat farms, the water-courses running high and brown, stands of drowned trees amid the newly planted fields, and the towers of Sacramento gleaming through the haze. Billie Jean Redemeyer waited for me at the gate. She was a tall redhead in jeans, boots, a patterned vest over a pink blouse, and looked reassuringly like the cowgirls back home in Wyoming.

I had been hearing about Billie Redemeyer from Jim Catron for the past year, but I had first heard from her three weeks before when a fax message came in, handwritten on stationery decorated with a drawing of seven cows making a cow pyramid to allow the topmost one to chainsaw a tree branch supporting a spotted owl on its nest. "Greetings Chilton," the message began, "My dear



friend Jim Catron asked me to send this article to you." From Jim, I knew that Billie had had an urban upbringing in San Francisco where she was employed as a fashion model before moving to the Sacramento Valley. Eventually she went to work for the Roney Land and Cattle Company, eight miles north of Chico, becoming not only a rancher herself but an activist on behalf of the cattle ranching industry. Between us, Billie and I burned up the fax lines for days before I put an end to the business by inviting myself to Chico to witness at firsthand ranching California style. Now, 50 feet above sea level and 100 miles east from the Pacific coast, palm trees soared above gardens in spring flower, and the air was warm and soft. We drove north through Marysville, Yuba City, and Oroville, Mexicanized communities supplying labor to the wilderness of fruit orchards stretching on either side of the highway. At Chico Billie stopped to purchase groceries and show me this pleasant university town of 80,000 people with its handsome Victorian business and residential districts, its overstory of palm and oak trees, and its pervasive sense—characteristic of all university towns, as of the novels of Hemingway—of physical well-being coexisting with existential despair.

Wally Roney's great-great-grandparents homesteaded the upper Sacramento Valley, wedged between the Sierras converging from the southeast to meet the Cascade Mountains and the coastal range lying between the Sacramento River and the Pacific Ocean, on land acquired from the Stanford Land Grant. The open pasture between Wally's house and that of his parents', stretching as far as the foothills rising to the Lassen National Forest, was good to see after the tens of thousands of acres of almond, walnut, pistachio, and plum trees, interspersed by kiwi vines, I had looked at on the drive from Sacramento. Wally, Billie, and I sat up late that first night, drinking California wines and saying unkind and subversive things about the U.S. Forest Service, and the next morning it was raining. The weather was too wet for branding, so we spent the day driving on muddy back roads through orchards along the swollen Sacramento River in sheets of the warm spring rain. The trees were black with the rain except for the whitewashed stumps to which the walnut shoots had been grafted. Some of the orchards had been cut over for replacement, and the bucked trunks and branches were stacked in black dripping piles beside the roads. Stands of blossoming trees alternated with budded ones, waiting to be pollinated by bees from the beehives set at intervals through the orchards. Much of the property we looked at was owned by Wally's relations, although some of it had become alienated over the years by family who had ignored the Roney tradition of never mortgaging the land. Wally is a knowledgeable orchardist, but what interested me more was his work as a progressive cattle rancher.

A graduate of the state university at San Luis Obispo, familiar with the work of Dr. Wayne J. Burkhardt (retired associate professor of range management at the University of Nevada, Reno) and of the late Professor Jan Bonsma (a specialist in livestock ecology and climatology), Wally Roney believes that grazers are part of the natural economy of landscapes, and that scientists and livestock breeders are capable of breeding adaptable livestock totally in harmony with their environment. Suspecting that cattlemen who emphasize the number of their animals over the number of pounds of beef they produce annually are self-eliminating, Wally is careful to adapt his management practices to changing conditions, in order to sustain a high level of productivity. "Poor management," he says, "will hurt your cattle before you hurt the land." Having convinced his father, Elwin Roney, that Roney Land

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and Cattle should experiment with Barzona Cross cattle, Wally found himself laid up in the hospital when it came time to buy. "Those are awfully funny looking cows," Elwin said. "Are you sure you want me to do this?" "Go ahead and do it," Wally told him, "while I don't have to look at them while making the decision." Barzona Cross, or "commercial cattle," are actually a heavier animal than the ubiquitous Hereford, though to my eye they appear lighter, being longer and more delicate in the leg: a feature that not only improves their appearance but allows them to cover long distances in search of graze and water. In the 12-month cycle, the Roney herds graze across valleys, foothills, timbered high country, and highland desert. They are a nonriparian-dependent breed—meaning they do not spend their lives mucking about along water courses, trampling banks, and destroying the vegetation that impedes erosion and siltation. Since siltation and erosion are among environmentalists' chief objections to cattle-grazing on the public lands, you might suppose that the Roneys enjoy the gratitude and encouragement of the green police in the pay of the federal government. Of course, Roney Land and Cattle has as much to suffer from the Forest Service as any other leasor on the national forests does.

In the morning the sky had cleared but the branding pens were muddy, and Wally decided that, rather than brand, we should move part of the herd from the ranch to the edge of the foothills. Elwin had the horses saddled when we reached the senior Roneys', and Billie and I rode out across the pasture while Wally and Elwin, on four-wheelers, drove back the stragglers and got the animals moving toward the hills. Billie had instructed me to keep back several hundred yards from the herd or they would yaw, spread, and cut back on us. I obeyed her, and, somewhat to my surprise, the cattle eased forward as though guided by remote control. We put them through a gate and across the old homestead, a grassy park grown with oak trees and the long-needled digger pines, to Pine Creek, where we sat the horses at a distance as we watched the cows cross. Beyond the creek was a pasture spread with pink volcanic rock. The horses plugged along and the cattle proceeded as surely as if the trip were their own idea. "You're not bored?" Billie asked. "I was afraid you would be." I said that I was not bored. While there had been none of the galloping away on tangents and in circles, the ki-yiing and ssshing, the barking dogs, and the bitter dust, the insides of my knees were unchafed and my vocal cords retained their heldentenor strength. "Wally hates what he calls farmerized cattle," Billie explained. "He doesn't like cows that are domesticated—dependent on man for their thinking, their survival, for calving."

It rained again the following day when Wally had a meeting with the Forest Service in Susanville, across the mountains on the Nevada border, and a heavy snow was falling as we crossed the pass, the great trees pressing in upon the road and closing it over. Recently the Service had built a bicycle path over the cattle and wildlife trail around Eagle Lake where the Roney herd summers, and the cattle, having recognized the trail in its altered condition, had used it to gain access to a campground that the Forest Service preferred they didn't use. Debatably, the cows had precedence, but the feds, showing almost as little respect for them as if they had been white European males, intended to ignore their rights if they could. While Wally was closeted with the enemy, Billie and I drove back into the mountains where the storm had begun to clear out. Since the road to Eagle Lake lay under several feet of snow, she took me instead to see the headquarters of the Roneys' summer operation, an open park entirely surrounded by forest. Owing to the snow rising 12 and 15 feet on either side of the highway, little of the park was visible but only the trees, which seemed to stretch forever across the high plateau. It seemed impossible that graze existed on the forest floor, or, if it did, that anyone could gather cattle from what looked like impenetrable darkness. But Billie assured me that there was plenty of grass for them to eat and that Wally was adept at driving his cows through the trees, often dismounting to track on foot as he led the horse behind.

At last the pens were dry enough to brand. Wally and Elwin herded up the calves and slaughter steers on four-wheelers, which on modern-day ranches have substantially replaced the cowpony, and we began running them through the chutes. With his penknife Wally notched ears, then threw the lever operating the calf table that laid each calf on its side, when he tied its heels with a rope. While he set the brand on the hip, I vaccinated; finally, using the penknife again, he slit the young bulls' scrota and removed the testes. Wally said that Billie's reaction to her first branding had been predictable, but that she got over it soon enough. When her sister Patty, visiting from San Francisco, showed up at branding time dressed like a rodeo queen, Wally thought it prudent to joke her a little beforehand, to take the edge off the hoots and wisecracks from the cowboys. He did, and she got mad. But later it spoiled the boys' fun a little.

Emily Roney gave us a good dinner at the house and afterward Wally and I loaded the one-ton GMC flatbed with salt and drove in compound low, at four and five miles an hour, into the foothills to leave the salt for the cattle when they arrived there. The foothills were volcanic, steep and knobby, thickly covered with oak and the digger pine. Cut by canyons and deep, partially wooded basins, the country looked to be ideal deer habitat, yet we saw only a single doe and her two fawns, cropping the new grass on the sharp summit of a hill. Wally said that when he was a boy the foothills had been full of deer, but that since the state of California declared the mountain lion a protected species in the 1970's, the exploding cougar population had wiped out the deer. Several years ago a lion killed a horse he had left snubbed to a tree up here, and he and Billie were considering carrying sidearms now when they rode into the foothills. Proposition 197, which would have revoked the cougars' protected status and permitted them to be taken by licensed hunters, was bitterly opposed by environmentalists and finally defeated in the primary in late March, after death threats had been made against its supporters.

This was lovely country, very green in spring but with some of the starkness and barrenness of the interior West, and also of the British Isles; I remarked to Wally, a fellow Celt, that there must indeed be such a thing as racial memory, at least where an instinct for landscape is concerned. Billie awaited us at home with supper almost ready and a videotape of *Braveheart* she had rented from a video store in town. We watched it after eating, drinking wine in Celtic solidarity, and applauding especially the scene in which the Irish mercenaries embrace their Scots cousins on the battlefield, and another where Longshanks hurls the Prince of Wales' male lover through the castle window.

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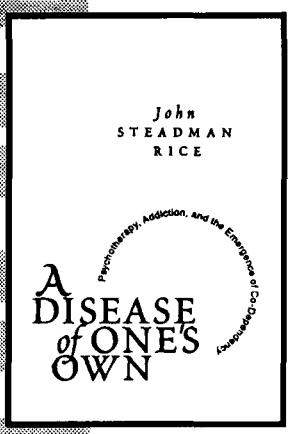

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